

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

Monitor Headquarters
2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708

APRIL - - - 1966

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Published monthly in braille and distributed free to the blind by the National Federation of the Blind, President: Russell Kletzing, 4604 Briarwood Drive, Sacramento, California, 95821

Inkprint edition produced and distributed by the National Federation of the Blind, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708

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STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

By Charles I. Schottland

[Editor's Note: Charles Schottland is Dean of the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. This address was delivered at the National Conference on Standards for the Blind, New York City, November 1, 1965]

It is a gratifying experience to participate in this National Conference on Standards which will review standards for administration and service programs for organizations serving blind persons in the United States. One cannot but help being impressed with the Herculean task faced by the Commission on Standards and Accreditation established by the American Foundation for the Blind in 1964--tasks which it discharged through twelve committees comprising more than 130 leaders throughout the United States. In my 38 years of experience in the health and welfare field, both in voluntary and government agencies, I have not seen as distinguished a group working on standard setting for any program with which I am familiar. The members represented management and labor, business and government, voluntary agency and public officials, academicians and practitioners in programs for the blind, experts in education, health, welfare, rehabilitation, employment, housing and almost every specialist area dealing with the visually handicapped. It is indeed an impressive array of talent and the American Foundation for the Blind is to be congratulated on its action in setting up the Commission which is now presenting its recommendations. It is another milestone in the many achievements of the Foundation since its organization in 1921.

The establishment of such standards is indeed timely. There are so many agencies, voluntary and governmental, touching services and programs for the blind, that very few people, if any, really have a comprehensive understanding of all of them. To the public administrator, faced with numerous programs and institutions touching his interests, accreditation is a safeguard against funding poor programs. This is one of the many reasons why accreditation is now a popular hit theme in the current education, health, and welfare arenas. This intense interest in standards, recognized by some type of accreditation process, has developed for many reasons: the rapid growth and proliferation of national, regional, and local voluntary agencies and organizations in the education, health, and welfare fields now numbering more than 100,000; the insistence of contributors on better standards

of service; increasing professionalization; new knowledge which enables practitioners to assist in the solution of problems heretofore tackled on the basis of good will and lack of knowledge; the rapidly changing nature of our public health, education and welfare programs--these are merely indicative and not a complete listing of the numerous factors accelerating the movement toward raising of standards.

As I review the procedures followed by your Commission on Standards and Accreditation, it is interesting to note that it follows in its major outlines the work of the National Council for Homemaker Services. The National Council developed a "Code of Standards for Homemaker--Home Health Aide Services." Representatives of seventeen national welfare and health agencies, chaired by an outstanding authority on homemaker programs, organized into a "Committee on Standards For The Code." Their work was completed in June of this year. After development of the Code, they held a three-day workshop in Princeton, New Jersey, to clarify, discuss and modify the principles set forth. Although it is purely a guideline without any binding effect on any agency whatsoever, it has already in the few months following its publication had an effect on raising the standards of homemaker service in several agencies. The Homemakers emphasized their striving for excellence and the important role which their Code of Standards would play in achieving such excellence.

The past decade has witnessed this striving for excellence on the part of governmental as well as voluntary agencies serving the community; almost every professional discipline has sought to establish standards for training, education, and performance on the job; the Federal government has been raising the standards it requires state and local agencies to meet if they are to receive Federal funds from more than the one-hundred grant programs in the health and welfare fields alone; national health, welfare and educational organizations have raised standards for accreditation; the Social Security Act was amended in 1962 in order to promote better services for the 8 million persons receiving public assistance, including some 110,000 needy blind and new goals and standards have been promulgated for these assistance programs. The 1965 amendments are involving standard setting for medical institutions which may receive funds under the new or expanded medical assistance programs--these are some of the numerous efforts to develop the highest standards possible for the services rendered to the American people.

The move toward accreditation, standard setting, and evaluation, as a method of raising the standards of various types of health and welfare agencies received considerable emphasis in 1961 when the

National Social Welfare Assembly approved a "Report of Assembly Ad Hoc Committee on the Role of Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies." This Report stressed the importance of evaluation of service and performance and the voluntary cooperation of agencies in the periodic evaluation of needs, programs, practices, and performances.

The so-called Hamlin report, "Voluntary Health and Welfare Agencies in the United States - An Exploratory Study by an Ad Hoc Citizens Committee" identified a number of areas for which specific measurable guides of agency effectiveness should be developed. It stressed that the objectives of an agency should "be consistent with standards set up by national accrediting or, appraising bodies. It should not duplicate the programs of other agencies serving the same groups. It should be evaluated periodically against an accepted set of standards." As many of you know, this report was very controversial. However, it did accelerate discussion around standard setting and accreditation.

The field of rehabilitation has been particularly concerned with the problem of standard setting. In the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Administration and in state and local public and voluntary rehabilitation agencies both for the blind and for others, there has been considerable discussion about the importance of some type of standard setting and accreditation machinery. The importance of such machinery was forcefully presented in the Journal of Rehabilitation a few months ago by Dr. P. J. Preventhan, Executive Vice-President of Goodwill Industries of America, who stated, "With respect to accreditation and standards, the hour is already upon us when these tools of acceptance and evaluation must be established. In practically all other areas (medicine, education, and health, to name but a few) there are professional standards relating to the content and quality of service provided."

E. B. Whitten, the Executive Director of the National Rehabilitation Association, wrote an article for the May-June 1964 issue of the Journal of Rehabilitation in which he said, "In fact, accreditation has been so generally accepted as the American way of bringing system and order into various types of institutions that it is being practiced in almost every group and institutions which serve the public directly. There appears to be no satisfactory substitute and benefits outweigh liabilities."

These comments have been quoted to indicate the climate in which the work of the Commission on Standards and Accreditation for agencies serving blind people is to be reviewed and considered by this Conference. Certainly the subject is timely in relation to services for

the blind.

I recall in 1941 a meeting in Washington of the United States Public Health Service discussing problems of the blind when a speaker prophesied that the number of blind would decrease as our knowledge of blindness increased, methods of prevention of blindness and restoration of sight improved, and the rise in the standard of living and education assisted in preventing unnecessary blindness. Unfortunately, this has not come to pass. The number of blind has increased more than the increase in population during the past 25 years. Although there has been a decline in blindness caused by infectious diseases and accidents, the growing incidence of blindness among our older citizens has increased. With the increase of aged in our population, cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetes have been significant factors in maintaining a high rate of blindness among those over 65 years of age. Of the 400,000 blind (using prevailing Federal government definitions of blindness) more than half are 65 years of age or over, approximately two-thirds are fifty years of age or over, and only one in ten are under twenty-one.

At this Conference we are concerned with agencies serving this group of blind persons and with efforts to raise standards so that the blind may benefit from the best in modern education, health and welfare programs. That the blind have not always had the best services available is well-known to all of you. I have visited schools for the blind which were excellent and schools which were not; I have seen schools manned by dedicated, competent teachers and others staffed by the rejects of other institutions. I have visited rehabilitation centers and workshops with excellent physical equipment and personnel totally inadequate in numbers and quality; I have seen surgical services for the blind carried on by doctors not qualified as ophthalmologists, sometimes because organizations of or for the blind themselves have not insisted on the best qualified surgeons.

The time is here when these sub-standard services need to be improved and this Conference, I hope, will agree on methods of accomplishing this. The twenty-five or more accrediting bodies in the field of education have demonstrated how standards can be raised through the accreditation process; the accreditation of hospitals has resulted in much better medical care; accreditation of child placing agencies and children's institutions by the Child Welfare League of America has resulted in the closing of many sub-standard children's institutions and the upgrading of scores of others; the requirement in the Social Security Act that public medical institutions would receive funds under the public assistance titles only if there were a standard setting authority in the state, set the stage to lift some of these institutions out

of the medical and hospital dark ages and into modern medical institutions.

Having been associated with several standard setting and accreditation efforts, I anticipate that many questions will concern the delegates to this Conference. Some agencies do not now meet standards which might be adopted, either because they have not had sufficient financial resources or personnel have not been professionally qualified or programs have not progressed from those of a previous era or for many other reasons. What assurance is there that an accreditation process will raise these standards and result in better services for the blind? I believe that an examination of the work of accrediting agencies provides the answer. Although there have been criticisms of accreditation programs (standards set are too low or too high; consultation from the accrediting agency is inadequate; accreditations may imply control, etc., etc.,) I believe that any objective evaluation of the major accrediting efforts will reveal that they have resulted in improved programs and services.

All accrediting programs have certain common elements: First, the general purpose is to promote and inspire high quality of service.

Second, this purpose is forwarded by the accreditation which is recognition that the agency or institution meets established standards or criteria.

Third, the accreditation process promotes and assists in the self-improvement of institutions being accredited. Those institutions which fall below the standards have an incentive to raise the standards in order to meet accreditation goals. On the other hand, those agencies that wish to experiment, to go beyond the accreditation standards are certainly free to do so.

Fourth, accreditation protects the contributing public (whether tax-payers or voluntary givers) and the consumers of the services by assisting them in understanding the scope and quality of the services being provided by various institutions. It is recognition that some competent agency has certified that accepted minimum standards have been met.

Fifth, it protects the community by assuring the community that the agency has a socially valid purpose, is responsibly financed, properly organized, well-staffed and well-administered.

Sixth, it provides a guide to organizations which make grants for

research and demonstration projects and other worthwhile activities; for example, in the field of social welfare, grants for the training of social workers are generally limited to those schools accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Seventh, qualified professional personnel now in short supply are more likely to be interested in working for an accredited agency.

Eighth, many blind agencies and institutions are interested in becoming affiliated with medical schools, nursing schools, and other such training facilities. Many of the training schools have hesitated to affiliate with institutions not accredited by some national body.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that accreditation protects an institution from irresponsible pressure by special interest groups whether internal or external. All of you are familiar with examples of agencies that have been held back in their development because of the pressure of special interest groups. Sometimes it is the medical staff or the nursing staff, or the teachers, or the social workers, or outside organizations of interested contributors or beneficiaries of the service.

I would like to sum up the purpose, objectives, and values of the accreditation and standard setting process by asserting that an examination of this process in other disciplines and organizations leads to the conclusion that it has helped to reinforce professional practitioners, administrators and their governing boards in their own pursuit of excellence.

As we review the current health, welfare and education scene, one must inevitably come to the conclusion that standard setting and accreditation will be a lively issue during this next decade. The 1965 Amendments to the Social Security Act, particularly those involving medical assistance to low-income groups require that states must spell out the methods they expect to use to assure a high quality of medical services in their states. The mere size of the public programs throws this whole question of standards on a giant screen where all may examine it. It is trite to say that we live in an era of change, but change is nowhere more noticeable than in the multiplicity of governmental programs, in the health, welfare and education fields. The average American community has several hundred Federal programs affecting its citizens. There are well over a hundred education programs and many separate grants procedures emanating out of the Office of Education alone; there are over one hundred different types of research grants being made by the Federal government, and over twenty of them in the health and welfare fields; more than thirty

programs for the mentally retarded alone emanate from Washington. The total list reaches into several hundred.

It is inevitable, therefore, that governmental programs are going to look to agencies which meet accepted standards as those agencies with which they will cooperate, and in which they will have confidence to carry on programs supported by Federal funds.

When I began my career in social work in 1927, discussion of services and programs for the blind was relatively simple. There were only a few schools and rehabilitation centers and relatively few public assistance programs along with a scattering of miscellaneous voluntary societies, and some scattered self-help efforts on the part of the blind themselves. The programs represented a segregated approach to problems of the blind, and the objectives were primarily to assist the blind, and the objectives were primarily to assist the blind in their distress and handicaps rather than to help them out of their distress and assist them in integrating into the general life of the community. Today there is hardly any broad community program whether education, rehabilitation, social services, public assistance, child welfare, crippled children, aging, or programs in many related fields which do not have implications for the visually handicapped. Although slow in coming (the blind have not had a vigorous civil-rights movement found in connection with other handicapped people) our schools, our rehabilitation agencies, our public assistance programs and scores of other programs dealing with the general population also encompass the blind. Just as the various contributing agencies, public and private, are demanding standards and frequently accreditation in these broad programs, so they will be increasingly demanding accreditation of those agencies whose primary objective is geared to programs for blind people.

It has been interesting to see the insistence of contributors on high standards. A large national labor union has taken the position that its membership will not accept standards set by accrediting agencies for hospitals and nursing homes unless those standards are high and meet what the labor union considers acceptable standards. United Funds, spurred by contributors, are increasingly concerned about the failure of some agencies to meet the standards of national accrediting bodies and are insisting that they do so.

As one reviews the present status of services for the blind, the various developments in our public schools and educational programs, the numerous changes in rehabilitation programs and rehabilitation objectives, the attempts to break down long-standing prejudices

against the employment of blind persons still existing in many quarters, one is struck by a consistent trend, namely, the trend toward professionalization of services provided by agencies serving the blind. I hope that this professionalization of services will contribute to the movement to break down the barriers of segregation, discrimination, and that the social and economic blind ghettos will gradually disappear. I believe that the accreditation process upon which you are embarking will assist in these general directions and goals.

Those of us charged with the responsibility for the administration of a variety of education, health and welfare service, whether as board members, professional staff, or public officials, are not the owners or proprietors of the agencies or programs giving such services. We are trustees for the public or segments of the public which have entrusted funds, programs, services and organizations to our care. We have a responsibility in the discharge of that trust to develop programs with the highest possible standards, not for the sake of standards alone, but for the sake of having a standard of service which will give to those dependent upon the service the best that modern science and knowledge has to offer.

You, as interested participants in services for the blind, as representatives of organizations for the blind and organizations of the blind themselves have a responsibility to forward the general movement toward raising standards of such services, agencies, and institutions, and this Conference represents unparalleled opportunities to do so. I share with you the hopes and aspirations of the members of the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the blind that this Conference will be a significant milestone in improving the lot of the some 400,000 blind men, women, and children in our affluent society.

MORE ABOUT COMSTAC--A COMMENT ON THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The keynote address at the COMSTAC conference in New York last November was entitled "Striving for Excellence in Community Services for the Blind." It was delivered by Dean Charles I. Schottland, currently Dean of the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare of Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, former head of the California State Department of Welfare, and former U. S. Social Security Commissioner.

This keynote address is similar to all keynote addresses, expressing enthusiasm for the project at hand, assuring success for a fine endeavour and spurring the COMSTAC project on to greater heights. However, some analysis is needed by those who are following the COMSTAC efforts with interest and alarm. There are some disturbing things to be found in Dean Schottland's words, even more in his attitudes.

As might be expected, Dean Schottland was somewhat awed by the majestic assemblage of names connected with the formulation of these standards and felt that: "It is indeed an impressive array of talent. . . ." He seemed to feel that gathering 138 people with well-known names in the various fields was sufficient guarantee of the stature of the standards to be presented.

He went on to touch on the fact that setting up standards for all areas in the Health, Education, and Welfare field is a current fad. He cited a different study and standards-setting group and noted the similarity of its program to the COMSTAC procedure, intimating that the success of "Standards for Homemaker -- Home Health Aide Services" is another bellwether of excellence of the COMSTAC standards in work with the blind.

Dean Schottland quoted several reports in the health and welfare field that have recommended accreditation of various health and welfare services. He then proceeded to federal recommendations for some form of accreditation and standards, quoting Dr. P. J. Preventhan, executive vice-president of Goodwill Industries of America: "With respect to accreditation and standards, the hour is already upon us when these tools of acceptance and evaluation must be established. In practically all other areas (medicine, education and health, to name a few) there are professional standards relating to the content and quality of service provided."

All of these bases for the need for accreditation, it will be noticed, are of a kind. They all have in common the basic need for a volume of material and a body of knowledge that is necessary to achieve an improvement of the mind and/or body. In education accreditation is based on amount of knowledge accumulated through degrees of education on the part of the faculty. There is very little concern with the effectiveness with which the knowledge is imparted to a student, because the college can change teachers, or, more importantly, the student can change teachers or colleges if he feels the transfer of knowledge is not what he requires. Medicine deals with certain definable level of effectiveness in amount of knowledge a doctor must possess; drugs

have specific dosages for specific effects; surgical practices are definable and research is not only encouraged but in certain ways required. After prescribed testing procedures, new and improved techniques are adopted. What is accredited is not so much the attitude but the possession of sufficient quantities of teachable knowledge of specific quality--demonstrable standards. Public and private health agencies have defined and specific minimum standards which are provably effective.

Even when Dean Schottland talks about certain rehabilitation procedures, the basic philosophy and attitude is never in question. Replacement of limbs and the techniques of using the replacement can have but one philosophy--with prosthesis, the client is capable of functioning with the old techniques -- or very nearly so. Definition of the capabilities of heart and stroke patients can be set and no one questions, any more, the fact that these handicaps can be overcome in certain measurable ways, and to discoverable extent. Dean Schottland's speech is based on the belief that the other standards of which he speaks and standards which would be set up by COMSTAC would be comparable. Either from ignorance of blindness, or from at least as custodial an attitude as is possessed by the COMSTAC framers, Dean Schottland has placed himself squarely in the ranks of those who believe in the essential helplessness of the blind. Perhaps misled by his acquaintance with accreditation committees whose only work has been to define degrees of quality, he has missed the essential need for a revolution in thinking which is called for before Agencies for the Blind can be meaningfully accredited. He seems to assume that merely upgrading (perhaps what COMSTAC is recommending is not upgrading at all, but the very opposite) the academic qualifications and facilities will improve the opportunities for the blind, not realising the basic fact that blind persons will continue to be pushed into the helplessness the COMSTAC framers believe they cannot rise above until control is taken from the custodialists.

Dean Schottland states that, having been connected with several standard-setting efforts, he anticipates there will be questions about the draft standards. Yet never once does he mention any of the questions coming from the blind themselves. He does not hint that they should be consulted or even heard. Which is, perhaps, natural, since one doesn't consult kindergarten students as to what their teacher should know or teach, or patients on what doctors should know, or for that matter people who are being helped by public health nurses as to what they should be treated for. These are the standards with which he would seem to be familiar. It does, however, point out one fact--even

experts in related fields can miss the essential point the American Foundation and COMSTAC are so carefully avoiding--that blind persons are normal people who have lost only one faculty, their sight, and therefore need training and opportunity, not custodial care. If the COMSTAC cogitations were opened to the organized blind, many of the things Dean Schottland anticipates would come true--not only the raising of academic and physical standards, but definition of capabilities and recommendations for firm and determined policies of implementation and development of these capabilities.

In his final paragraph, Dean Schottland shows that his beliefs about blindness are not much more progressive than those of the COMSTAC representatives to whom he is speaking: "I share with you the hopes and aspirations of the members of the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the blind that this conference will be a significant milestone in improving the lot of the some 400,000 blind men, women, and children in our affluent society." How much better could it have been phrased! You don't "improve the lot" of someone you think capable of improving himself.

There is no change in this speech from the tone of the standards themselves, no ray of encouragement to the blind in this keynote address. Whether from ignorance of the needs of the blind, or from active collusion with the beliefs of COMSTAC, Dean Schottland set the tone of custodialism which carried through to the end of the conference. Like COMSTAC, like Keynote.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship, administered by the National Federation of the Blind, is given annually to legally blind university students working toward professional degrees (graduate and undergraduate) in law, medicine, engineering, architecture and the natural sciences. The scholarship, established by a bequest of Thomas E. Rickard in honor of his father Howard Brown Rickard, carries payments varying from \$250.00 to \$1,250.00 per year.

Applications for the coming academic year (1966-67) should be filed by June 1, 1966. They may be obtained from the National Federation of the Blind, 4604 Briarwood Drive, Sacramento, California 95821.

N. Y. BLIND SET LEGISLATIVE GOALS

A bill intended to bar discrimination against blind schoolteachers in New York City--the only city in the state still holding to the old policy of prejudice--has been introduced into the state legislature at the behest of the Empire State Association of the Blind. The measure would give to blind persons otherwise qualified the right to teach anywhere in the state, expressly including "a city having a population of four hundred thousand or more."

The teacher eligibility amendment--significantly introduced in the Senate by the chairman of the Committee on Education, Senator D. Clinton Dominick III--heads an imposing roster of new bills sponsored by the ESAB. Other measures include:

A bill which would allow an employer who hires a blind person an extra tax exemption equal to the amount of salary paid to the blind employee--thus furnishing an inducement for industry to hire blind individuals who are capable but cannot find employment. The bill was introduced in the Assembly by a newly elected blind legislator, Assemblyman Gilbert Ramirez.

A bill which would give to the New York State Commission for the Blind the responsibility of determining the type and location of a vending stand, snack bar or other enterprise in state-owned and leased buildings

A bill authorizing the Commission for the Blind to hire two investigators for the purpose of seeking out new locations in state or private owned buildings where vending stands or snack bars operated by blind persons could be installed for the Commission.

A bill to abolish the requirement of relatives' responsibility in the welfare law of the state.

These measures, introduced simultaneously in both the state Senate and Assembly, reflect long-term efforts on the part of the Empire State Association and its state legislative chairman, William S. Dwyer.

THE LONG CANE IN BRITAIN

(From The New Beacon, January, 1966)

Sir. --I should like to congratulate the RNIB on the recent

experiments with the long cane. The published data, however, disclose two disturbing features.

First, an almost complete absence of any mobility training in schools for the blind; even at Hethersett it would appear that insufficient attention had been paid to the subject prior to the tests. When are these schools going to broaden their educational programmes to include such tuition?

Second, the accidents caused to members of the public. Some of those tested at Torquay in heavy pedestrian traffic tripped up passers-by. Quite apart from the undesirability of this sort of thing, is it wholly fanciful to envisage the possibility of a successful action for damages against a blind man in such circumstances?

I think the test results demonstrate that the long cane has a place as an aid to mobility. However, it would be wrong to represent it as a dramatic break-through. This subject of mobility is of very great importance to the blind. Science must have a big part to play in this field in the very near future, and my plea is that the Institute should now appoint a mobility officer to explore the whole field, rather than attach exaggerated importance to the long cane.

London SW1

D. A. WATSON

Sir. -- News of the long cane technique is of great interest to me as I have been using a long cane in the manner recommended for about fifteen months.

There seems to be some disagreement about how long the cane should be. Some recommend a cane reaching from the ground to the elbow, others think that one reaching as high as the collar-bone is best. For myself, I find that a cane standing on the ground vertically and reaching by breastbone is quite adequate. At first I used an RNIB forty-inch crook-handle collapsible cane. I found this cane just long enough to be useful. Later on, I made a longer stick out of a couple of lengths of aluminium tubing which pushed into one another, and this I covered with white electrical insulation tape. This contraption was fifty-four inches long. Last year I obtained a collapsible cane from the American Foundation of the Blind (the "Alluminaid") which is obtainable in lengths from thirty-six to fifty-four inches and in construction is very like the RNIB's thirty-six inch folding stick. It is very much lighter than my home-made one.

In my experience, the tip of the cane presents the greatest

problem. The amount of punishment the tip has to take is quite surprising. When it touches the ground there is a slight sliding action and on some kinds of surface the tip tends to bind or catch. If it is too pointed it will tend to catch in cracks in the pavement. The material from which the tip is made must be very tough to withstand the filing action which even the lightest touch will give.

Since using the long cane technique I have been walking around with greater freedom than before. I am no longer concerned with following walls and fences as I was. I find that I do not move much faster over very familiar ground, but I do so over ground I do not know so well, and I am much more confident over strange ground. I have never had any obstacle sense. With the long cane I feel less at a disadvantage, for the stick strikes obstructions before I do. In all honesty, however, I must admit some hazards, or nearly so. This may be due to faulty technique on my part. Nevertheless, I would never now go back to the old groping methods I used before hearing about the long cane.

Carshalton, Surrey

ROBERT J. TROTTMAN

BLINDED MAN FILES LAWSUIT FOR \$1 MILLION

(From Washington Post, January 14, 1966)

A young dishwasher blinded in a shooting in an Arlington restaurant September 15 has sued his assailant for \$1 million in damages.

Robert Lee Lansdown, Jr., 22, of 5005 N. 20th Street, Arlington, was blinded after being shot in the kitchen of the Belmont Restaurant, 4030 Lee Hwy. A Washington cab driver, Jake Kelly Newsome, 40, 1787 Lanier Pl. NW., was convicted Wednesday of felonious assault in the shooting.

The suit, filed by Alexandria attorney Edwin C. Brown, Sr., alleges that Lansdown "will be unable to work and provide for himself the rest of his life . . . (He) has been caused to suffer great mental anguish and physical pain and will continue permanently to so suffer."

Newsome's attorney, Thomas J. Harrigan, said yesterday that Newsome faces a sentence of 12 years in the State Penitentiary as a result of his conviction, and that Newsome "doesn't have any independent estate or assets" to cover any award in the suit.

A DEBATE ON INSURABILITY OF THE BLIND

Conflicting views on the degree of insurability of blind persons have been expressed in a recent sustained exchange of correspondence between the vice president of a major national life insurance company and an official of the Iowa State Commission for the Blind.

Manuel Urena, assistant director of the Iowa Commission and himself a blind person, purchased a policy from the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company last November although the firm refused to include normal provisions for Accidental Death Benefits and Waiver of Premium Benefit on Disability, expressly on the grounds of blindness.

In a letter protesting the refusal, Urena maintained that seemingly obvious beliefs about the incompetence and accident-proneness of the blind, "in the foreseeable future when public misconceptions are correct, . . . will be shown to be nothing but uninformed and discriminatory judgments."

In reply Victor E. Henningsen, vice president of the insurance firm, "applauded" Urena for his attitude but stated that "in insuring lives we necessarily deal in averages. . . . Undoubtedly among a group of blind persons there will be some lives which will not be more accident prone than individuals having their sight. But as a group we believe that their accident rate is higher. Hence we have taken the cautious view and have never issued accidental death coverage to blind persons." He added that "we think that as a group blind persons can be more subject to disabilities arising from injuries and further have some restriction at least as to the area of activities for gainful employment."

In his second letter Urena referred to the insurance official's analogy of overweight persons who were said to have a higher mortality rate, thereby becoming greater insurance risks. His letter continued:

"I think that you put your finger on the crux of the matter when you stated in your letter, 'Based upon studies, we know that individuals of a given age and height, but overweight by, say, twenty-five pounds will, on the average, experience higher mortality.' But note in your reference

to blindness:'. . . we think that as a group blind persons can be more subject to disabilities arising from injuries. . .' Do I make my meaning clear? If you possess equally incontrovertible evidence correlating blindness (exclusive of complications such as diabetes, etc.) to accidents or disability as you obviously possess about overweight persons then the issue is settled.

"Differential treatment based upon sound principles of reason and wisdom is proper; differential treatment based upon traditional beliefs or emotional reactions usually is the stuff which constitutes discrimination."

Urena pointed out that in his professional career he comes into regular contact with numbers of blind people, representing a cross-section of the population. "Most are careful, competent men and women going about the business of earning a living. It is because of my personal and professional knowledge of blindness and acquaintance with hundreds of blind persons that I am forced to conclude that we deserve the benefits which complete insurance can bestow. Deeply rooted in our heritage is the precept that the individual is to be considered innocent until proven guilty. It would seem perfectly fitting and proper that an analogous doctrine applies in insurance--namely, that an individual receive equal treatment and full coverage until reason and logic, not superstition or belief demonstrate the contrary. "

Replying a second time, Northwestern Mutual vice president Henningsen expressed conviction that "you go too far in suggesting that our position 'constitutes discrimination' We will frankly concede that we do not have the statistics for blind persons 'either good or bad' that we have for overweight. Now if there were statistics that supported the point that the incidence of disability or accidents was no higher among blind persons and we then refused to recognize these statistics, we would indeed be guilty of discrimination. "

He maintained that the insurance company's "cautious view" regarding the total insurability of blind persons was like the caution exercised during the early days of commercial aviation, when there were no statistics on the hazards of air travel but insurance firms took no chances on those who flew at all frequently. "Looking back today, there is no doubt but what the views of years ago were too conservative. But few would conclude in the light of the situation of years ago that the cautious view then taken was incorrect. "

In a third letter sent a few weeks later, Urena thanked his correspondent for willingness to discuss the issues "stripped of emotion-

alism and extraneous irrelevancies. Although it may prove necessary to resolve these problems in another arena, this dialogue has made the issues crystal clear." He noted that there was evident agreement between them on several points:

"One, insurance companies operate as businesses rather than as charitable institutions. . . . Two, where actuarial data is available, differential treatment based upon such material does not constitute discrimination and is completely justifiable. . . .

"Moreover, a careful scrutiny of our correspondence reveals another area of agreement: both you and I concur that you do not possess any statistical or other actuarial knowledge correlating blindness with greater frequency of accidents or the occasion of other disabilities. It would follow, therefore, that we are in agreement that the basis for denial of my request does not rest upon knowledge but solely upon beliefs."

Urena then summarized the points at issue in the correspondence: "The essence of my position is that I am being unjustly discriminated against. The central thesis of my argument is that unless concrete evidence is brought forth my blindness should in no way interfere with my insurability. In your last letter you rejected this contention out of hand-- incidentally, without any substantiation."

Regarding the analogy with the early aviation industry, Urena recalled that in that situation "insurance companies, in formulating their policies, undoubtedly went to the best authorities in the field and sought to get from them the best judgments that were then available. It seems entirely reasonable to me that when there exists an incomplete body of knowledge it is proper for an individual or a firm to seek counsel from those who devote time to the subject or are professionally qualified to make educated guesses.

"It is apparent from your statements that you regard yourself as qualified to have an informed opinion regarding blindness," Urena continued. "I respectfully submit the proposition that, if an educated guess is to be made concerning the nature of blindness, I am in a better position to make such a judgment on two counts. First, because of my long personal experience with lack of sight, I have had to cope with all of its ramifications for over twenty years. Second, as an Assistant Director of a public agency which is designed to rehabilitate the blind, I come into contact with many blind people in all sorts of circumstances --therefore, I have the professional opportunity to have an informed opinion.

"Thusly, even if your position were legitimate, it would appear that your decision to refuse certain aspects of insurance to blind people was made on something other than professional authority. It seems quite clear that your beliefs about the blind are based largely upon traditional misconcepts which needless to say have been proven wrong countless times. "

Urena went on to argue that "with respect as to whom the burden of proof falls upon, it is my contention that your company -- as well as all the others -- must bear the burden of responsibility since you all insist on establishing a relationship between blindness, accidents, and the frequency of other disabilities. "

In the final letter of the series, Henningsen conceded the lack of statistics on the limitations and hazards of blindness but argued that "certainly in the absence of statistics complete enough to be meaningful, this company's management has the right to exercise its judgment in the adoption of underwriting rules. "

He said that the exchange of correspondence "has served a purpose in that we have had to ask ourselves whether we should or should not continue our present practice of not offering the Accidental Death Benefit to blind individuals. We have concluded that we should make no change in this practice which we adopted when we began writing accident death coverage approximately three years ago. "

LYLE VON ERICHSEN DIES

Lyle Von Erichsen, 65, longtime leader of the organized blind in Spokane and in the state and a veteran Hillyard attorney, died here March 25, 1966.

Mr. Von Erichsen was born in Minneapolis and moved with his family to Spokane at age 6. He was blinded a year later by scarlet fever.

He was graduated from the University of Washington in 1922 and from Harvard Law School in 1925.

While still a college student he took the lead in forming an organization for the blind in Spokane. He has been president of the Spokane group for 30 of its 40 years.

He served as president of the Washington State Association for the Blind for five years. In 1937 he drafted the legislation which provided

for state assistance for the blind and establishment of training centers.

Mr. Von Erichsen was a four-time delegate to the National Federation of the Blind. He has served as a member of the public assistance advisory committee of the state Division for the Blind for 25 years, and in recent years has been honored as a member of the Board of Directors of that organization. He also maintained an active law and insurance business.

He was a member of Hillyard Congregational Church.

His wife of 34 years, Fern, who helped him in the office for many years, died in 1963, and he remarried recently.

Survivors include the wife, Mirrion E. Von Erichsen, at the home, N4923 Crestline, and a son, Gary Von Erichsen, Ft. Ord., California.

FDA CONFESSES "GOOF" ON DRUG

(From San Francisco Chronicle, March 10, 1966)

The Food and Drug Administration admitted yesterday that its sloppy practices let a new drug investigation mushroom to dangerous proportions. . . .

DMSO -- also known as dimethyl sulfoxide -- has been in use as an industrial solvent for a century. Only in recent years did its wraith-like property enabling it to seep through a person's body become known to medical investigators. The drug also showed promise as a pain killer and treatment for arthritis and several other diseases that defy modern medical methods.

The FDA officials, while admitting their agency's shortcomings in allowing the drug to be tried in 20,000 persons, said some firms and investigators delayed reporting adverse effects of DMSO, including eye damage.

Tests on humans were halted by the FDA last November after reports of eye damage in animals were received from Wyeth Laboratories, changes that first were noticed a year earlier, Dr. Sadusk said. Since then, 24 cases of eye injury in humans from the drug have been detected.

"TALKING BOOKS" FROM SEVEN SONIFEROUS LIBRARIES

(From Der Kriegsblinde, January, 1966)

Already in all times a considerable part of the blind people in Germany has been finding access to literature in its widest meaning by way of braille-script. But unfortunately has this share been a considerably small one, compared with the totality of the German blind people. The people blinded in advanced age, we have in mind here particularly the war-blinded people, had it rather difficult in most of the cases to get used to the braille-script. As a rule they mostly had already trespassed the age-limit in which it is easy for people to learn, moreover most of the war-blinded people had already practised a profession before their loss of sight, and during their soldier's time they were expected and used to do rather hard a job, that consequently their hands were everything but tender or smooth, knowing well to handle the delicacy and fineness of the six braille-script dots. In all those cases where blindness has been a consequence of age, it was only in a few exceptional cases possible to learn still braille-script.

For all of them, i. e. the people blinded in advanced age, the senile people and of course also for the young generation of the blind people, there exists today in the (Western) German Federal Republic the possibility to get from the seven blinded people talking book libraries, free of cost, "talking books", filling so an aching void for all those blinded people who only know badly or not at all braille-script. Hereby it is possible to give the blinded people an access to literature, the belletristic literature (novels, works of fiction, stories, short stories, or scientific or special literature).

The German war-blinded people took from the very beginning their good share at the establishment of the Talking book libraries. Also at present their representatives are active and busy in the responsible bodies and corporations of the talking book libraries, co-determining in this way the further construction and the total structure of them.

Besides the 'German Blinded People Library of Talking Books' (Deutsche Blindenhorbucherei) in Marburg (Lahn) which has to fulfill also supraregional tasks on the domain of scientific and special literature, there are still six other talking book institutions of regional significance and tasks. All these seven institutions are united in the 'Working Community of German Blinded People Talking Books', which interchange their different programs. It is for every hearer possible to obtain, by way of his regional talking book library a literary work on magnetophonic tape from another talking book library.

As for the technical aspect of the talking book library there shall still be mentioned the following:

The talking book libraries have their own reception-studios. In these are read by trained speakers the works and books to be transferred, keeping them on magnetophonic tapes. From the so called "mother tapes" which existed by this way, a certain number of copies is made. All the listeners have at their disposal a magnetophonic tape recorder on which they can hear the relative tape (in most of the cases there are several tapes which belong to one story, subject, etc.). In the German Federal Republic it is at present practically possible for every blind person to buy, with the help of a public help funds existing for similar aims, such a tape recorder. The war-blinded people obtain their tape recorders as an orthopedical means within the war-veteran's welfare service. After having heard the "talking books" they will be sent back to the blinded peoples library. The German Federal Mail authorities realise the forwarding of the parcels containing tapes of the spoken books free of charge.

It might still be mentioned that before speaking of a literary opus on a magnetophonic tape, it is always necessary to get a license and permission of the corresponding publishing house which edited the work. As a rule most of the publishing houses are willing to give their agreement. They demand, however, that the "talking books" be listened to only by blind people, and that they may not be used for any professional industrial aims.

At present there are in the German Federal Republic seven talking book libraries for blind people, having far more than 6,000 "talking books" at their disposal. There are permanently new works being added and the programs of literature are permanently being enlarged. That is only possible by considerable public allowances to the libraries for blinded people. By these public allowances, the blind people of the German Federal Republic shall be able to participate in the spiritual and literary life in the same way as their other seeing fellow-men, who can go to the public libraries to get the books they want or need. Also, these libraries are mostly maintained and supported by the state. We, the war-blinded people, are very much interested in the further existence and the still better establishment of the talking book libraries sustaining and supporting everything that might be helpful for this aim, having felt in an agreeable manner, everyone of us, that by the "talking book" libraries has been opened for us all a wide window to the outer world. Somebody said that by the invention of the "talking book" the blind people have turned to be a little less blind. Well, at least he, the

blind man and the blind wife, have turned to be a little less dependent, since he or she get by the mail the "talking book" into his home.

SOUTH CAROLINIANS MOVE TOWARD COMMISSION

A giant step toward the long-deferred goal of an independent state commission for the blind in South Carolina was taken in February with the affirmative recommendation of a special legislative committee followed by the introduction of a bill for that purpose.

The report of the nine-member "committee created to study the situation of the blind in South Carolina" said that facilities and services for the blind in the state are "inadequate" compared with "the best programs of other states," and concluded that "the interest of the state and of its blind will now best be served by the creation of a Commission for the blind." It proposed that two of the Commission's five members be blind persons.

The committee's emphatic support for the commission represents a signal victory for the state's organized blind and a defeat for the state department of public welfare, which currently controls all services to the blind and would retain only the public assistance program. Under its president, Don Capps, the statewide Aurora Club of the Blind had fought for years to liberate the blind programs of orientation and rehab from the state agency. The club's efforts culminated last year in the formation of the special legislative committee, which held hearings and visited other states for purposes of comparing welfare services.

In its report the committee noted that Kenneth Jernigan, director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, was prominently among those hear in favor of the proposal. Jernigan, who is also first vice president of the NFB, made a trip to South Carolina late last year to present a strong case for the separate commission. At his invitation, a committee member also visited the Iowa Commission in order to observe the operations of an independent state agency for the blind.

The report of the legislative committee declared that "The creation of a separate Commission for the Blind would in itself tend to eradicate in the mind of the public some of the stigma attached to blindness. It would remove blindness from the public image of 'welfare-ism.'"

Specifically, the report emphasized that "There is a need within

the State of South Carolina for more comprehensive rehabilitation and training for gainful employment. There is a need within the State . .

for a commission which will give more profound and far-reaching emphasis and encouragement to the employment of the blind. "

Under the heading "Reasons for Recommendation, " the special committee stated as its first consideration: "The Division of the Blind of the State Department of Public Welfare is to be commended for the job that it has done, but your Committee feels that in order to serve effectively the needs of the blind in this state, a separate organization, with fully qualified and trained personnel whose duties are solely to minister to the needs of the blind is essential. That such an organization can upgrade the status of the blind in South Carolina and can return many blind people to gainful employment has been proven by experience of the states. "

Expressing particular concern with the relatively poor level of "medical and eye health" in the state, the legislative body pointed out that "South Carolina has some 8,000 blind citizens and except for Hawaii and Mississippi has more blind cases per 1,000 population than any other state in the United States. South Carolina ranks among the top ten states in reporting the highest number of new cases of blindness each year, having 3.20 per 1,000 population.

The full program of services to be undertaken by the proposed commission would include: a vocational rehabilitation training center, a sheltered workshop, a "program of assistance in orienting capable blind individuals to attend public schools and colleges, " a systematic employment and placement service, a blindness prevention program, an orientation program centering around mobility and daily living skills, a system governing "distribution and repair of talking books, tape recorders and other educational machinery used by blind persons, " and other services "to open the door of opportunity wide to those blind persons who have the incentive to accomplish. "

Total cost of the commission was estimated at \$400,000 annually, with the five members to be appointed by the governor for four-year terms.

REHAB AND THE CONCEPT OF DEVIANCE

By Eliot Freidson

(From Rehabilitation Record, May-June, 1965)

The discussion of the concept of deviance should clarify the profound sociological difference between the majority of the problems confronting rehabilitation and those confronting medical practice in general. The practicing physician usually deals with illness--a form of deviance for which the individual is not held responsible, which is not stigmatized, and which is often curable. Rehabilitation, however, seems to be involved with the consequences of illness or other misfortunes. While, by and large, the individual is not held responsible for his difficulties, they are nonetheless stigmatized and are considered essentially irremediable or incurable.

What is at issue in rehabilitation is not that the blind should have functioning eyes, the amputee new living legs, but rather that the blind and the crippled should be able to perform some "normal" tasks without "normal" equipment. The handicapped remain deviant, and the task of rehabilitation is to shape the form of their deviance, which is quite a different task from that of healing the sick or punishing or salvaging the delinquent.

This characteristic of rehabilitation poses moral problems that are even more severe and poignant than is the case with any other type of deviance control. Here, perhaps more than anywhere else, including the field of mental hygiene, the idea of "adjustment" can be used in a mechanical and profoundly conservative way that rides roughshod over the unhappy individuals involved. Goffman describes the stereotyped adjustment of the "good deviant" eloquently, so I can do no better than to quote him here:

The nature of a "good adjustment" requires that the stigmatized individual cheerfully and unselfconsciously accept himself as essentially the same as normals, while at the same time he voluntarily withholds himself from those situations in which normals find it difficult to give lip service to their similar acceptance of him. . . . It means that the unfairness and pain of having to carry a stigma will never be presented to (normals); it means that normals will not have to admit to themselves how limited their tactfulness and tolerance are; and it means that normals will remain relatively uncontaminated by intimate contact with the stigmatized, relatively unthreatened in their identity beliefs. . . . The stigmatized individual is asked to act so as to imply neither that his burden is heavy nor that bearing it has made him

different from us. At the same time he must keep himself at that remove from us which ensures our painlessly being able to confirm his belief about him. . . A phantom acceptance is thus allowed to provide the base for a phantom normalcy.

HOUSE HEARING ON TALKING BOOKS FOR PHYSICALLY DISABLED

"This is a major step in recognition that all physically disabled persons have a right to and should be assured the opportunity for a full and worthwhile life" declared John Nagle, NFB Washington Office Chief. Nagle was testifying before the House Subcommittee on Library and Memorials, March 29. He gave the unqualified support of the organized blind to H. R. 13783.

H. R. 13783, sponsored by the Librarian of Congress and introduced in the House of Representatives by Honorable Omar Burleson, Chairman, Committee on House Administration, would amend the federal Books for the Blind Law to allow all persons unable to read regular printed matter by reason of a physical impairment, certified to by a competent authority, to participate in the library service to the blind program.

Originally scheduled to consider several different bills to make changes in the federal Books for the Blind Law and Program--including the Federation-Corbett proposal (H. R. 9549), to provide federal funds to share in the administrative costs of the existing library service program for the blind--the March 29 hearings before the Library Subcommittee amounted to a unanimous endorsement, by representatives of some dozen national organizations, of the Burleson bill.

Although the NFB gave full support to the Burleson measure Nagle, on its behalf, expressed some misgivings.

The Federation's spokesman emphasized four particular concerns of blind people: (1) that reading material to them not be lessened in quantity or quality, (2) that ample funds be provided for the expanded library program for the physically impaired, (3) that libraries for the blind, which provide this, as well as other services, to blind people, not be required to serve non-blind persons in the proposed expanded library program, and finally, (4) that, if libraries for the blind and physically handicapped are established under other legislation (H. R. 13697,

Library Services and Construction Act expansion), state libraries not be allowed to be interposed in the Library of Congress-local distributing library relationship.

Nor was the NFB representative the only voice raised in the hearing to call attention to the possibility that harm might result to library service for the blind in an expanded program.

Congressman Robert J. Corbett, Pennsylvania, long-time friend of the organized blind, and sponsor of the successful effort to establish a music scores library for the blind in the Library of Congress, was unable to be present at the Library Subcommittee hearings. In prepared remarks addressed to his congressional colleagues, he cautioned the Committee to make certain declarations of intent and policy with reference to any expanded library for the handicapped program. He echoed and reaffirmed the recommendations of the NFB.

Chairman of the Library Subcommittee Paul Jones, Missouri, introduced John Nagle as a witness in the congressional hearings, and commended John for the caliber of his representation of the interests of blind people before Congress.

Then, when John had concluded reading his prepared statement, Congressman Jones said emphatically that neither he nor any other member of the Subcommittee wished to act in any way to injure the library services provided to blind people, that the Committee would certainly make this very clear in its report if a library expansion bill is approved by the Committee.

The following organizations were either represented in the hearings by spokesmen or by written statements submitted for the record. All spokesmen and all written statements favored inclusion of non-blind physically impaired persons in the federal Books for the Blind Program:

AFB, AAWB, AAIB, BVA, ACB, National Association of the Physically Handicapped, United Cerebral Palsy Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, American Library Association, and the American Optometric Association.

Identical to H. R. 13783 is S. 3093, introduced into the United States Senate by Senator B. Everett Jordan, North Carolina, Chairman of the Joint Senate-House Committee on the Library.

Although it may be a while before the Library Subcommittee of the House of Representatives takes any action on library for the physically

handicapped proposals, it is expected that, in due time, the Burleson bill (H. R. 13783), will receive Committee approval, that it will pass the House and Senate--probably without a dissenting vote in either chamber --and that it will become public law before the 89th Congress has concluded its Second Session later this year.

WHO SPEAKS FOR THE POOR?

(From Los Angeles Times Editorial, March 3, 1966)

The very low turnout in Tuesday's anti-poverty election was disappointing but not disastrous to the program. Far from it.

Critics of the war on poverty will read the results as a vote of no confidence. It was not.

The decision to allow the poor to pick their own 7 delegates on the 23-man board by direct ballot was based more on idealism than realism--and with a strong nudge from the Federal Government.

That less than 1 per cent of those eligible cast ballots proves only that a better means of selecting poverty area representatives on the Economic and Youth Opportunities Board must be found.

The war on poverty represents a basic new direction in dealing with the problems of the poor. Unlike most welfare programs, it seeks to help the underprivileged help themselves to break the poverty cycle.

To achieve that goal, there must be the greatest possible participation of the poor themselves in planning and carrying out anti-poverty programs.

The Times strongly believes that delegates of the poverty areas should sit on the program's policymaking board. Their unique knowledge of the problem is indispensable, and their very presence on the board gives the rest of the poverty community a sense of involvement they have not before known.

Federal regulations properly--although somewhat ambiguously--provide for "maximum feasible participation" of the poor and for "democratic selection" of their representatives.

In the light of Tuesday's experimental election, however, those

terms need redefinition. Local and Federal anti-poverty officials must waste no time in developing a better system.

The theory that those with a family income of \$4,000 or less would flock to the polls ignores the harsh realities of their background and environment.

These are people who, for the most part, have lost hope that their grinding poverty would ever be improved. Many perhaps had never participated in an election. The usual motivations of citizenship simply were not present.

The anti-poverty program, in effect, has only begun. It is far too early, therefore, to expect that it already has changed attitudes, years even generations, in the making.

Yet as the war on poverty progresses--and it must--much of that despair can change to hope. And with hope apathy can be dispelled.

Every effort must now be made to strengthen the program, to correct its defects, and to give tangible evidence that there is hope for all the victims of poverty's cruel effects.

MASS. BLIND FIGHT FOR COMMISSION

A legislative maneuver which would strip the Massachusetts Division of the Blind--one of the nation's most progressive state agencies --of its identity and much of its authority is arousing militant opposition from the organized blind men and women of the state. Their opposition has taken the form of a campaign for an independent state commission for the blind to supercede the present division.

The threat to the existing division of the blind, which is a part of the state Department of Education, came to light when leaders of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts--notably Charles Little, legislative chairman, and Manuel Rubin, president--discovered the significance for the blind of a 1965 report submitted by a special commission appointed to "investigate and study education facilities" in the state. The report recommended drastic reorganization of the existing Department of Education, including the dissolution of all of its present divisions and agencies. It was followed in the same month (June) by the passage of a law incorporating the group's proposals.

The probable fate of the division of the blind in the scheduled

reshuffling of educational offices and functions was described in a "Fact Sheet" released to all agencies and organizations serving the blind in the state from ABM President Rubin:

"Without any special clarifying amendment, the Division of the Blind is incorporated into the Division of Administration and Personnel," Rubin wrote. "It would sustain a complete loss of organization and functional visibility and, as a result, would become completely submerged as a Bureau in one of the proposed divisions. The Director would become a supervisor, a Bureau chief serving under the Board of Public School Education, and would be stripped of most of the power and authority he can currently exert. He would no longer be the executive and administrative head of the agency. He would no longer be authorized to represent the blind before the legislature. His powers of decision would be severely limited.

"If, on the other hand, it should become the judgment of the Board that the programs, services and functions of the Division of the Blind be relinquished to another state department or departments, the agency would, in effect, be phased out with its many and inter-related programs and services being allocated to several different agencies."

In response to this anticipated threat the Associated Blind helped to frame a comprehensive bill amending the new reorganization law to recreate the division of the blind in the form of a separate state commission. Charlie Little, through a succession of interviews, secured the cooperation of State Senator Kevin Harrington (one of two members of the special investigative commission) who undertook to file the bill with the legislature for early hearing. Aided by the support of Father Thomas F. Carroll, head of the Catholic Guild for the Blind, the ABM's goal of an independent commission seemed just around the corner.

Then, abruptly, Senator Harrington withdrew the bill he had already filed. His sudden about-face on the proposal was thought to be the result of pressure from an organization calling itself the Massachusetts Association for the Adult Blind, led by Helen Cleary. In late January, ABM spokesmen had met with a committee of the Cleary Organization specifically to discuss the issue and to seek support for the Harrington Bill. In contrast to the strong endorsement received from Father Carroll, the Cleary group curiously remained noncommittal and unenthusiastic.

In his fact sheet, the ABM's president Rubin noted that from 1906 to 1920 the Division of the Blind had in fact been an independent

commission, but found itself tacked on to the Department of Education in 1920 as a result of an amendment to the state constitution.

In 1954, according to information given the MONITOR by Charles Little, a state "Baby Hoover Commission" on administrative reform recommended that the division of the blind be left in the Department of Education because of its "vocational training" features; ironically, however, vocational training has since been removed from the division of the blind and placed under the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.

"The Division of the Blind has practically nothing in common with the Department of Education and less in common with [the proposed new] Department of Public School Education," Rubin declared in his fact sheet. He pointed out that the latter department is designed to be primarily a supervising and standard-setting agency, while "the services to the blind are direct social services administered directly to blind persons" through a staff of trained social workers.

RETIRED BUT SO BUSY!

(From The Spokesman-Review, February 27, 1966)

In St. Joseph Rest Home at Polson [Montana] these last four years, an unusual person has been residing. She does unusual things, although at first glance her activities might seem routine.

Mabel Wenslick likes people -- she always has -- ever since her childhood in Illinois. She came to Montana with her mother and sister in 1922 to help keep house for two brothers near Lincoln, Mont. They had a ranch there. After 1933, when her mother passed on, she kept house for them alone.

One brother moved in the 1940's and in 1947 the other decided to sell the ranch. He and his sister moved into a small house they built at Lincoln. There they lived, among many friends, until his health failed in 1961, and they both moved to the rest home at Polson. She helped care for him here until his death in October of 1962.

With trust in the Lord and faith in people, however, Miss Wenslick continued her activities. She visits regularly her friends in the rest home, bringing cheer and encouragement to many in varied ways. She enjoys knitting, playing the piano, keeping up with current events,

writing letters. She's also an active member in the Golden Age Group, Polson's senior citizens' social organization.

She especially enjoys being able to read to rest home patients whose eyesight no longer enables them to read for themselves.

What makes all of this unusual is: Mabel Wenslick has been blind since childhood!

Not content with all her other activities, she decided to develop new talents. About a year ago she tried her hand at writing poems.

"They're different poems," she says, "rather long and detailed, all describing experiences in the lives of friends or their loved ones. I prefer the longer, story-telling poems. Short ones are forgotten too easily."

Not long ago, she wrote down in Braille some of the Christmas experiences from her childhood and from the experiences of her friends. As she compiled them, she thought they might make a nice little book for youngsters to read.

This last Christmas her biggest project to date was accomplished. She is now a published author. Under the pen name of Virginia Jameson she has published twelve of her poems in a book entitled "True Christmas Poems for Children."

For Mabel Wenslick, it's another accomplishment in a lifetime of accomplishments.

HIS DARK WORLD BECOMES BRIGHT

By Sue Gentry

(From The Missouri Examiner, February 17, 1966)

Jesse L. Ray, at 75, has come out of a world of darkness of nearly 30 years!

The wonderful news about Ray, who operates the concession stand in the Post Office lobby, has been slow getting around. But it accounts for that extra radiance in his always animated face in past weeks.

Totally blind since 1937, he can now see the brilliant colors and tinsel and cellophane on the candy bars, chewing gum and cigarette packs he sells, and the faces in front of the counter.

And he can thank a small boy who wanted to be helpful--although it seemed a painful catastrophe at the time--for the new sight in his right eye. It is only a partial sight but even so wonderful after the years of sightlessness.

It happened when Ray was filling his Coke machine and was leaning down to pick up bottles, one at a time from the case on the floor. The boy, thinking to do a good turn, was picking up a bottle as Ray started to lean down. The bottle top struck his right eye, full force.

"I saw stars by the dozens and imagined I saw bright lights," Ray recounts the incident. "It was so painful that I'm afraid I was short with the boy who tried to explain."

After the pain subsided a little, Ray said he knew he was seeing light for sure. "I was so confused, I had to shut that eye to see!"

An eye doctor told him it appeared that the blow had broken a calcium deposit and cleared the pupil. "He didn't promise me permanent sight, but he suggested I check with him from time to time," Ray said. "I feel that it's all the work of the Lord, I just can't help but wonder."

As a safety precaution he hasn't thrown away his cane.

Well, what does the jet world look like to a man who has only heard about it?

First, it's the colors close at hand that fascinate him.

"I didn't know potato chips came in yellow and green packages," Ray admits. "I thought the cellophane was clear."

And the women in those tight, light colored pants! There was a surprise.

"By holding a magnifying glass I saw Red Skelton in a funny looking get-up on television, the other night," he said proudly.

"Do you have one of those bright red cars?" he asked a woman customer. Yes, he said, the lines have changed a lot since the 30's.

What about the people he is used to visiting with every day at the Post Office?

"I told some of the men that they were uglier than I thought they were," Ray says facetiously.

CALIFORNIA VENDING STAND PROGRAM ASSAILED

A sharply worded but carefully documented attack upon the California Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation in its handling of the state vending stand program for the blind was made recently by the operator of an Oakland stand, Roland E. Andersen. The criticism was contained in a letter sent by Andersen to Assemblyman John L. Burton, a member of the legislative committee which has been investigating conditions of the federal-state vending program under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

Charging that officials of the controlling state Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation have sought both to persuade and to coerce blind stand operators to accept agency practices unquestioningly, Andersen in his letter declared that "nearly all operators, custodially treated and subservient to the Bureau, will tell [other] operators what they think, even sign a statement of disagreement with the Bureau if they do not have to present it in person, but will be certain to tell the Bureau officials that which they think those officials wish to hear."

Andersen said that he had "talked on the telephone with the operators of my area and have heard complaint after complaint, and remarks that would overheat the wires when the Bureau was mentioned. And I have heard those same operators meekly go along with the Bureau officials when those men were in their presence."

"These operators are afraid to talk lest they lose their locations or become victims of reprisals," Andersen asserted. He added that these fears are excessive but that agency officials should take account of the apprehensions of the blind operators.

"The cure for this situation is the dropping of the Advisory Committee, company union setup, and an open campaign advising the operators to join the California Council of the Blind, Inc., where differences can be discussed openly, fearlessly and fairly with no threat or duress involved."

The Oakland vendor declared that "the Stand Operators' Advisory Committee should be abandoned as a sordid attempt on the part of the Bureau at indoctrinating with a Bureau bias, and the operators [should] be allowed, even advised, to join with known organizations of the blind from all areas in a free and wholesome association where praise and criticism could be expressed and policies developed. "

Andersen reviewed briefly the long struggle by the organized blind in California to obtain a state vending stand program under the federal act, and the eventual success of their efforts in 1945. But he argued that the effectiveness of the program has been drastically cut back through the high-handed tactics used against blind operators by the state rehab office.

Referring to a provision in the state statute granting to stand operators the commissions from adjacent vending machines which "compete" with the stand, Andersen stated: "Our state bureau has known for a long time that this statement in the law is open to many interpretations, but has done nothing to fight for the blind in its program by writing a state amendment to the vending stand bill that would strongly favor the blind operators.

"The matter of vending machine commissions is a complete mess throughout the program," his letter asserted. "The operators receive the commissions in some locations, the operators divide the privilege with employee groups in others, and the employee groups receive the privilege in others. "

With respect to service charges leveled against blind vendors by the state agency, Andersen proposed that the operators be allowed to retain their profits without payment to the state. Pointing to the many benefits to the general public from the conveniently located stands, he maintained that "the state could foot the entire cost of the program, with . . . federal participation, making no service charge whatsoever and be well ahead because of the many benefits to its public employees and citizen users. No public expenditure could be more fully rewarded. "

The blind Oakland businessman supported his assertions with an impressive list of actual episodes demonstrating either indifference or indoctrination on the part of state rehab officials toward the blind operators, of the vending stand program.

BETTER VISION INSTITUTE, AD SHOWING A BLIND MAN. . .

Greenfield-Athol Association of the Blind

TIME, Inc.
Rockefeller Center
New York, New York 10020

To the Editors of LIFE Magazine:

Gentlemen:

The members of the Greenfield-Athol Association of the Blind, a chapter of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts and an affiliated member of the National Federation of the Blind, collectively express decided displeasure with the picture of the man on page 79 of the February 5 issue of Life magazine.

For the past twenty-five years the members of the National Federation of the Blind have been steadily improving the image of the blind person as an independent individual no longer reduced to begging for a living. You can imagine our horror at seeing, in your internationally distributed magazine, an advertisement of the Better Vision Institute clearly showing a blind man complete with our recognized symbol of independence (the white cane) in his right hand and our hated symbol of dependence (the tin cup) in his left. And, horror of horrors! - a placard on his back plying on the sympathies of all that can see him, announcing his blindness.

In several states, and in particular the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, our organized blind people have worked steadily towards legislation that will make begging unnecessary even unlawful. We have been proud of our progress in many sections of our nation. Here in Massachusetts begging is no longer permitted. The image of blindness has slowly but persistently pushed higher and higher until now blind individuals are a part of the society in which they live. Blind people work side by side with normally sighted people on competitive jobs. Blind people take active part in their local community life. Capable blind people are leaders in their chosen fields. All due, in part, to removing the "tin cup" and replacing it with the "White Cane."

Gentlemen, the National Federation of the Blind is the Voice of the organized blind in this country. And as a minute part of that great organization, we the members of the Greenfield-Athol Association of the Blind go on record as deploring advertisements that tend to exploit the

blind person for the selfish gain of the normally sighted world.

We would appreciate your forwarding our feelings to all those working in the Better Vision Institute.

Yours for greater independence of ALL blind people through improvement of the image of blind individuals - we are

Respectfully yours,

Eugene E. Sibley, President
Greenfield-Athol Association of the Blind

March 23, 1966

Professor Jacobus tenBroek
National Federation of the Blind
2652 Shasta Road
Berkeley, California

Dear Professor tenBroek:

What should be the role of a private agency for the Blind? What is Charity? Are we being measured by the stupid, the moron, and the imbecile? Do we really want freedom, or are we satisfied with the way we have been taken over? Satisfied to just read and talk among ourselves.

Reading COMSTAC against the Blind, perhaps prompted me to write, but long before this, I was convinced that these agencies were not for the blind: and that their primary interest was in their own employment without a doubt. So as long ago as 1939 I started carrying banners on the streets of Minneapolis for several years during the summers. Besides the carrying of signs, I printed and distributed 35,000 circulars in the city. And I know it did them some damage because they came out with a circular quoting some of mine which they wanted to answer, and leaving what they did not or could not answer.

So now they are setting up standards regarding services and other matters. This to me, means they are sure they have the blind as their property and prize. It means they will continue to do as they wish and not or but not, what we want and need. I think it is time for us to set up

standards of what we want and need. We must assert ourselves to show the "professionals" that it is because of us, our predicament, that they exist and that they work for our betterment if they are going to continue being "professionals." And by the way, professional does not mean qualified, it merely means what one is doing all the time only. As we have heard the saying, a "professional crook," or a "professional burglar," who thinks that is an easy way to make a living.

The role of an agency for the blind, and especially a private one serving the blind of a community, should be that of striving to create an atmosphere and a climate in which the blind people can live easier. It should champion the cause of the blind as for example. Take the case of a blind man having learned radio repairing--instead of helping him become established in his own radio shop, the society for the blind took him into their building and kept advertising their name rather than helping him get started for himself.

Then we should seek to define what is Charity? How about making brooms and weaving rugs, if the blind are doing it, then it is charity and nonprofit. We are not people. I suppose any contract work blind do is charity also. And the taking of contracts by these agencies for the blind to do some work the blind can do, is depriving and denying the blind to show the industry and the sighted people working there what a blind person can do. It is also depriving them from making friends of the sighted by not working along side of them. Likewise, the training in these centers also denies and deprives the blind of learning along with others who have sight and might be influential in getting a blind person into working where one of them may get work.

We need freedom and we must have freedom from these agencies. There is wholesale and widespread neglect of the blind and too much wrong impression is given of us. We are segregated instead of integrated by them. It is easier digging if you break through the crust in one place than it is by punching here and there. So I invite support to help here in Minneapolis where something has already been done and where the area is not so large that some action will be seen. Action is what is needed and not reading and talking.

Mike Kooreny
1818 7th Street, South
Minneapolis, Minnesota

STUDENTS IN WHEELCHAIRS

By John F. McGowan and Timothy Gust
(From Rehabilitation Record, July-August, 1965)

Among the University of Missouri's 16,000 students last semester there were 40 with severe disabilities. Twenty were in wheelchairs. Next term there will be at least twice that many severely disabled students, as we get into full swing with a program we began 5 years ago to make our school's campus, buildings, and services and courses of all types fully available to capable students with serious problems of locomotion.

Our University has accepted handicapped students for many years, but our physical facilities would not accommodate those with severe physical limitations. As a result, many students from Missouri and neighboring States were unable to obtain a college education. Some enrolled in other schools that had been modified to accommodate the handicapped. Others arranged for extra help to function on unadapted campuses. But these arrangements were expensive, unreliable, and generally unsatisfactory. In addition, they often had the unfortunate effect of increasing dependency rather than fostering independence.

With this situation in mind, we applied for and received a VRA research and demonstration grant to support modifications needed to serve severely handicapped students, particularly those from Federal Region VI (the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri). Three factors were involved in the project: (1) The modification of physical facilities, (2) the organization and coordination of services currently available, and (3) the creation of new services and facilities to meet the needs of this particular group.

The final report of this project, now in preparation, will serve as a manual for the use of other schools wanting to open their doors to paraplegics and students with other kinds of extensive physical impairment.

The modification of essential physical facilities was the first thing that had to be done in our project. As examples, a men's dormitory quadrangle with a common cafeteria and lounge was modified to permit wheelchair access to all areas. An elevator was installed in a women's dormitory so that second floor rooms could be used. Also, ramps, elevators, and other changes gave access to existing classroom buildings. Plans for all new buildings specifically provided for the elimination of architectural barriers.

Then came redesigning of drinking fountains, telephones, rest-rooms, and shower facilities, use of cafeteria carts, and recessing and cutting down curbs.

All physical modifications were made with reference to the specifications recommended by the American Standards Association. These modifications now permit a handicapped student to enroll in all major divisions of the University.

PROGRAM OPENS NEW CAREERS FOR BLIND IOWANS

By William L. Eberline
(From Cedar Rapids Gazette, January 31, 1966)

Des Moines -- Suppose you were blind and wanted a job as a newspaper reporter -- an electrical engineer -- a computer programmer?

Impossible, you might say -- and most people, including many of the blind themselves would agree.

But, says Kenneth Jernigan, director of the Iowa commission for the blind, it is anything but impossible.

In fact, a blind person has gone to work as a reporter, another as an electrical engineer and a third as a computer programmer -- all within the last six months.

They are graduates of the Commission's Orientation and Rehabilitation Center.

Placing them in these jobs, Jernigan says, represents an important breakthrough in opportunities for the blind who too often are regarded -- even by professionals working in programs for the blind -- as severely limited in the jobs they can hold and the lives they can lead.

Jernigan, himself blind from birth, holds a different philosophy. He expresses it this way:

"With proper training and opportunity, the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business -- and do it as well as his sighted neighbor.

"The blind can function as scientists, farmers, electricians, factory workers and skilled technicians. They can perform as housewives, lawyers, teachers or laborers. "

It is upon this philosophy that Jernigan started in 1958 to build a program for the blind in Iowa.

Now after eight years he says the program is paying off, not only in job placements but in a breakdown of what he calls historic public attitudes and misconceptions about the limitations of blindness.

Remodeling now under way will give the commission the largest library for the blind in the world.

The library -- besides giving service in Braille, taped and talking books to blind people all over Iowa -- is an important adjunct to the commission's training program. Jernigan says the training is aimed at giving the blind:

--Alternative techniques of doing things in which sighted people use sight -- independent mobility, reading, communication and the activities of daily living.

--Confidence in the blind person's ability to perform, with these alternative techniques, in a job or daily living as well as his sighted neighbor.

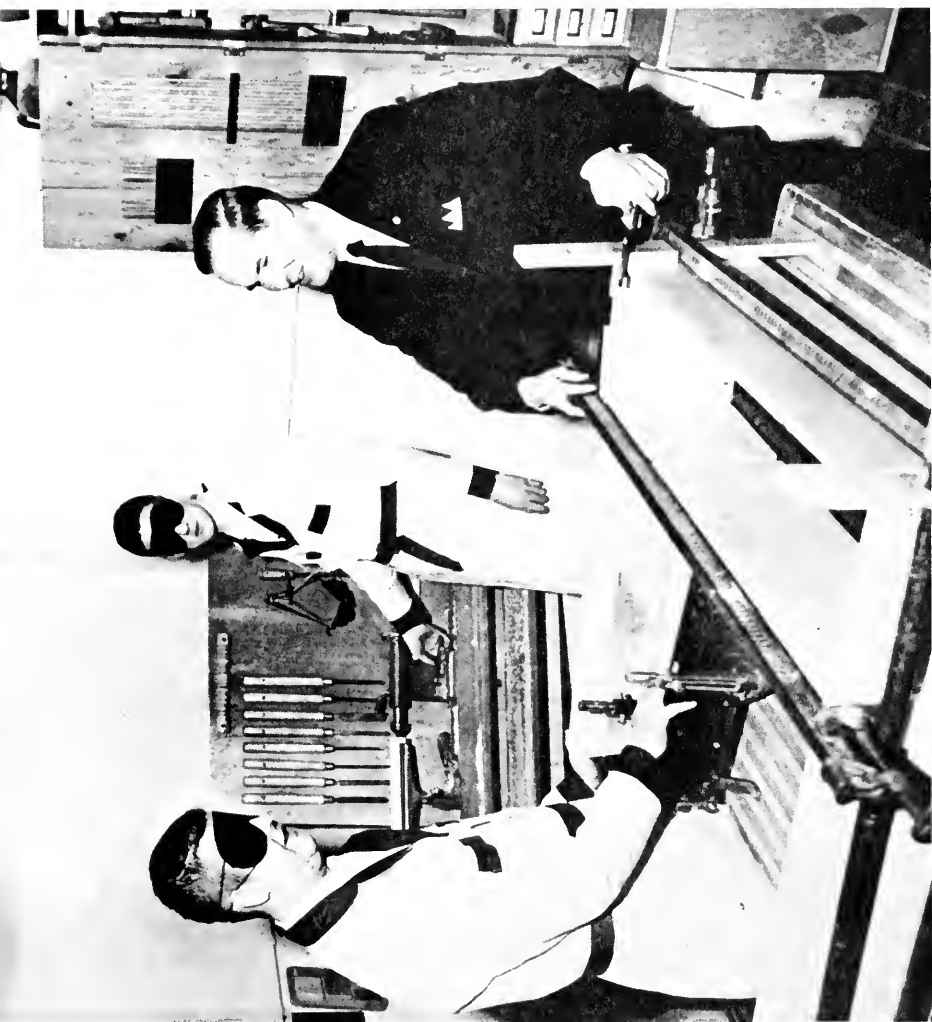
--The understanding to cope with public misconception that the word "blind" carries with it connotations of inferiority and helplessness.

Techniques are varied. They include physical training, wood-working for the men using power saws, lathes, reamers and the like, and use of power sewing machines by the women.

Jernigan said the purpose is not to make blind students champion athletes or channel them into careers in woodworking or sewing, but to develop coordination and confidence.

"A person who learns to master gymnastic feats and the use of Braille micrometers and power equipment," he explained, "gains confidence that he also can learn to run a Comptometer or typewriter and master other skills. "

The Iowa program for training the blind is gaining increasing national and even international recognition.



CHECKING PROGRESS--Two students at the Iowa Commission for the Blind orientation and rehabilitation center in Des Moines work with machinery in the woodworking shop as Commission Director Kenneth Jernigan visits them to check on their progress.

Praise and copying of programs has come from California, New York, South Carolina, Kentucky, Nevada, Montana and other states. Representatives of more than a dozen foreign lands have studied the Iowa program, and it has been featured in a U. S. Information Service magazine.

An official of the Library of Congress called the Iowa State Library for the Blind "the one regional library in the country which is already operating at a service level compatible with the current standards of library service for the blind."

The director said Iowa has more Brailist and transcription services available than all the other libraries for the blind in the United States combined.

Iowa is the only state, Jernigan said, which has a combined library and rehabilitation center in the same building and under the same management. He said the library gives added strength to the rehabilitation program, for instance in the teaching of Braille.

"It makes the difference between Braille being a usable tool instead of a novelty very early in the training process," he explained.

Jernigan admits his theories about the blind have caused considerable headshaking among administrators over the nation and still represent a minority view among that group.

"They may disagree with our theories," Jernigan said, "but they can't disagree with our results."

A BLIND CANDIDATE

(From Los Angeles Times, March, 1966)

Harrisburg, Pa. State Senator Leonard C. Staisey, a 45-year-old blind attorney, was picked yesterday as the Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania.

Staisey joins state Senator Robert P. Casey, of Scranton, 11 years his junior, as the choice of the Democratic policy committee. Casey was selected as the organization candidate for governor last week.

Staisey has been blind since seven as the result of a virus infection. He formerly served as an assistant district attorney of Allegheny County. In the courtroom, as in the Senate, he uses a

portable braille writer to make notes.

THREE CITED FOR HELPING SIGHTLESS

By Haig Keropian
(From The News, Van Nuys, Calif., March 27, 1966)

New hope, incentive and knowledge are being given to the blind and the deaf-blind through the concern and dedicated efforts of selfless men and women from various parts of San Fernando Valley. And tributes and praise for such deeds were paid at the third annual banquet of Twin Vision -- an educational project of the American Brotherhood of the Blind -- in the Queen's Arms Restaurant.

Twin Vision's work in bringing new leases on life to sightless children and adults were lauded by top officials of the American Brotherhood of the Blind and the California Council of the Blind.

Inspirational messages were given by these officials -- men and women of stature who have achieved success, peace of mind and victory over the handicap of blindness.

Cited for his "outstanding editorial service in bringing world news to the deaf-blind of the nation," was Rocky Spicer, area public relations director of the United States Steel Corp., and president of the Los Angeles chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic society.

Spicer's contributions to the Twin Vision project as editor of its "Hot Line" newsletter which is published twice a month for the benefit of those deprived of both their sight and hearing, were commended by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, president of the American Brotherhood for the Blind.

Dr. tenBroek, blind professor of political science at the University of California at Berkeley, presented plaques to Spicer and Willard F. Lombard, Glendale business executive and civic and community leader.

He commended Lombard for his fund-raising efforts for Twin Vision.

Another highlight of the banquet was the presentation of the first copy of a new Twin Vision book "Shape of Things -- Birds" to James McGinnis, president of the California Council of the Blind. This newest publication, created by Mrs. Robert K. Neel, author and illustrator for Twin Vision, was presented to McGinnis by Mrs. Charles P. Reed, president of Twin Vision Action Committee. She said it is dedicated to James McGinnis, "blind leader of the blind."

Previous books issued by Twin Vision include "Shape of Things -- Rockets," and "Shape of Things -- Space Ships."

Through Twin Vision books, parents and their blind children are able to share valuable reading experiences together. As a result of special pages with raised illustration in these books, children can follow stories on corresponding pages that are being read by sighted adults.

Thousands of copies of children's books already have been donated to Twin Vision by Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Callender of Newport Beach. Appreciation to the Callenders and the many other volunteer workers and supporters of the Twin Vision programs, was expressed by Mrs. Jean Dyon Norris, founder and director of Twin Vision.

Mrs. Norris further praised her assistant, Mrs. Rocky Spicer, and her sightless secretary, Lynn Curtis, at the Twin Vision office at 18432 Topham St., Tarzana.

Featured speaker at the banquet was Anthony G. Mannino, blind executive-secretary of the American Brotherhood for the Blind, who praised the "dynamic" work of the Twin Vision Action Committee. Mannino referred to the birth of the Twin Vision project and the persistence, faith and determination of its founder-leader Mrs. Norris.

He briefly discussed the 47-year history of the American Brotherhood for the Blind, and the many doors it has helped to open for the Blind. Mannino voiced optimism in the future of both the Brotherhood and Twin Vision.

Other inspirational speakers at the banquet included Dr. Isabelle Grant, former Los Angeles teacher and trustee of the American Brotherhood for the Blind; Perry Sundquist, secretary of the Brotherhood. Also Russell Kletzing, president of the National Federation of the Blind, and

Alfred Gill, social worker and trustee of the Brotherhood.

In addition to Mrs. Reed, Twin Vision Action Committee leaders include Mmes. William Pluth, assistant chairman; Boyd Morgan, secretary; Harry Ebbert, treasurer; Charles F. Rowley, immediate past chairman; Warren Leonard, ways and means chairman; John E. Lais, press chairman; Ruth Durham, telephone chairman, and Curtis Meby, hospitality chairman.

The contributions of all of these and other Action Committee members were praised by Mrs. Norris, Mrs. Reed, Dr. tenBroek and McGinnis, who served as banquet master of ceremonies.

TRACHOMA RETURNS TO INDIAN RESERVATION

By Ben Cole

(From Arizona Republic, March 13, 1966)

Washington -- Just before World War II, sulfanilamide was driving trachoma, an eye affliction, off the southwestern Indian reservations. Now the sight-destroying scourge is coming back. Gentle, serious-minded Chairman Winfield K. Denton, Democrat, of Indiana, of the House Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations, is concerned.

"It seems that we have about got tuberculosis whipped, but we can't stamp out trachoma," he said fretfully. Trachoma inflames the lining of the eyelid and produces a sandy, granulated material that causes the patient to suffer. His eyes are rheumy and swollen; and if the "sick eyes" are neglected long enough, the victim is condemned to blindness.

The Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc., sent its Indian health expert, Dr. Carl Muschenheim, before the Denton committee to appeal for \$250,000 a year, 5-year program to fight trachoma.

Dr. Muschenheim observed that the disease is rare among the general population (its incidence is high in Egypt and Palestine), but that it is a major cause of blindness among Indians.

It was fourth among the 10 most frequently reported diseases in Indians in 1964 when 7,043 cases were listed, an increase of 124 per cent over 1963.

In the 1930's the doctor recalled, one-fourth of the Indian

population suffered from the disease. Then sulfanilamide was introduced in 1938. Trachoma was put to rout and almost disappeared. Then came the war and the program stopped.

Dr. Muschenheim reported that of the 7,043 cases reported by the Division of Indian Health in 1964, most -- 4,517 -- occurred in the Phoenix health area, and 2,352 in the Window Rock health area.

Abandonment of the trachoma program during the war years, and failure to resume it afterward, had allowed the suffering to return. A survey on the San Carlos Reservation showed that children 5 to 18 years old are the main victims. In the Window Rock area, infection is at the rate of 15 out of 100 in school-age children. A San Carlos study showed 83 percent of blindness resulted from trachoma.

"Trachoma is a profound personal tragedy for its victims; and it is linked to the economic plight of the people," Dr. Muschenheim said, "for the visual impairment and blindness caused by the disease are an impediment to the acquisition of skills required to improve their economic lot.

"Trachoma is a preventable disease. Infection is due in large part to the scarcity of water on many reservations and to the lack of health education concerning proper hygienic practices in the home."

The 5-year expenditure of \$1.25 million would, the doctor said, roughly equal what it would cost to provide care for trachoma-blinded victims.

NEW WORK FOR BLIND PERSONS

(From Vocational Rehabilitation Administration Annual Report, 1964)

More than 5,000 blind persons were rehabilitated into employment in 1964 through the public program, only a small increase over the previous year, but a considerable accomplishment in view of the tremendous problems that have developed in the placement of blind persons in jobs.

Placement of blind persons in routine, repetitive machine operations -- once the mainstay of the program -- is being largely obviated by automation. Counselors today must be prepared to help blind persons into highly skilled and complex work, now widely available in many industries, but only for those who are well trained, adjusted to their disability,

and flexible enough for adaptation.

Again, the answers to these problems are being found in research. One illustration of the methods being developed to help blind persons keep pace with the effects of automation is the VRA-grant support given to research at the University of Cincinnati to find ways for blind persons to participate in electronic computer operations, and to a private organization in Pittsburgh for development of techniques in applying such knowledge to actual operations.

The language program instituted at Georgetown University a few years ago to teach blind students Russian and German has been an enormous success, and a similar project is being established at Occidental College in California to teach blind students to become linguists in Chinese and Arabic.

One of the important sources of employment for blind persons is vending stands, operated in public and private locations under the general supervision of State rehabilitation agencies and the provisions of the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Act of 1936.

The size of the vending operation has grown consistently. In 1964, there were 2,442 stands on Federal, public, and private property. They did a gross business of \$54 million and returned an average profit of \$4,452 to 2,641 operators.

Another successful program, for people with low vision, is the optical aids clinics in 20 States. These provide services to scores of persons whose low visual acuity has handicapped them for employment, by fitting magnification devices as a means of increasing their perception.

BLIND SPRINTER "NEVER FRIGHTENED"

(From AP, Portland, Maine, February 20, 1966)

A 15-year old sophomore who has been blind since birth is running the 40-yard dash for Cheverus High School.

In his first start, against Deering High of Portland, Billy Callahan of South Portland was clocked at 7.7 seconds. The winning time was 5.2. Bill cut his time to 6.9 in practice Wednesday and hopes to get it down to 6.5 by season's end. And he also plans to do the 100-

yard dash outdoors in the spring.

A reporter asked him if he were frightened in competition. "Never," he replied, "I'm excited and anxious to do my best but not frightened."

How does he stay in his own lane?

Billy holds in his left hand a metal ring which slides along a light guide rope. He is caught, a couple of strides beyond the finish line, by the Rev. James A. Dempsey, S.J., co-coach of track.

In warmups, Billy runs without the guide rope -- flanked by a teammate on either side.

Everyone at Cheverus is supposed to take part in some sport. Billy didn't want to be different and Father Dempsey said he'd try to make a dashman out of him if he'd work long and hard.

Billy spent his freshman year just learning how to run. He wasn't allowed to compete then--not even against his own teammates.

Scholastically, Billy is in the top 10 of his class. All his books are in braille, and he uses an intricate peg board for mathematical calculations. He's particularly interested in science and writes science news for the school paper.

Track isn't Billy's only sport. He has tried water skiing and does some target shooting at a National Guard armory.

BLIND MECHANIC "OVERSEES" AUTO REPAIR WORK

By Charles Johnson

(From Sacramento Bee, March 27, 1966)

At one of the four busy service stations at Watt and Marconi Avenues, attendant Bill Nix keeps on the run pumping gas and polishing windshields.

But when he runs into a tricky mechanical problem with a customer's car, he gets his dad, Milton Nix.

They walk out to the car together, and most people do not notice

that young Bill is nudging his father with his elbow, guiding him.

Milton Nix, master mechanic, is blind.

Once at the car, he leans over the engine, listening and feeling. He sends Bill for tools.

"I can feel the wind from the fan and I can judge where it is and stay away from it. I divert the customer's attention by talking to him and meanwhile I'm feeling around," he says.

Nix usually can tell what is wrong by listening, by feeling the heat in cables, by touching.

"I can tell a half-inch nut from a 9-16th, in a spot that anybody else couldn't even see."

Most times the customers never know Nix is blind but he does tell them if he gets caught -- if someone leaves something out of place and he walks into it.

"I don't want them to think I'm drunk, so I tell them," he says.

Usually they will not believe it, because Nix's alert blue eyes do not look sightless, and as long as he knows exactly where things are, he moves about almost like a sighted person.

"You're the one that's handicapped," Nix will tell you.

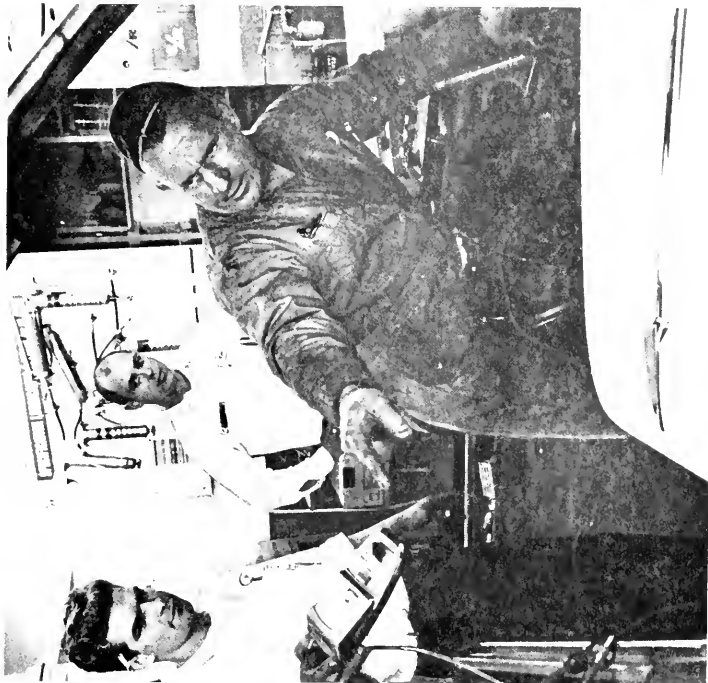
"When you open your eyes, you see this whole room all at once, and that's taxing on the brain."

With Nix, the number of senses has been reduced and, like a good mechanic, he observes: "You just have to learn to use the tools you have."

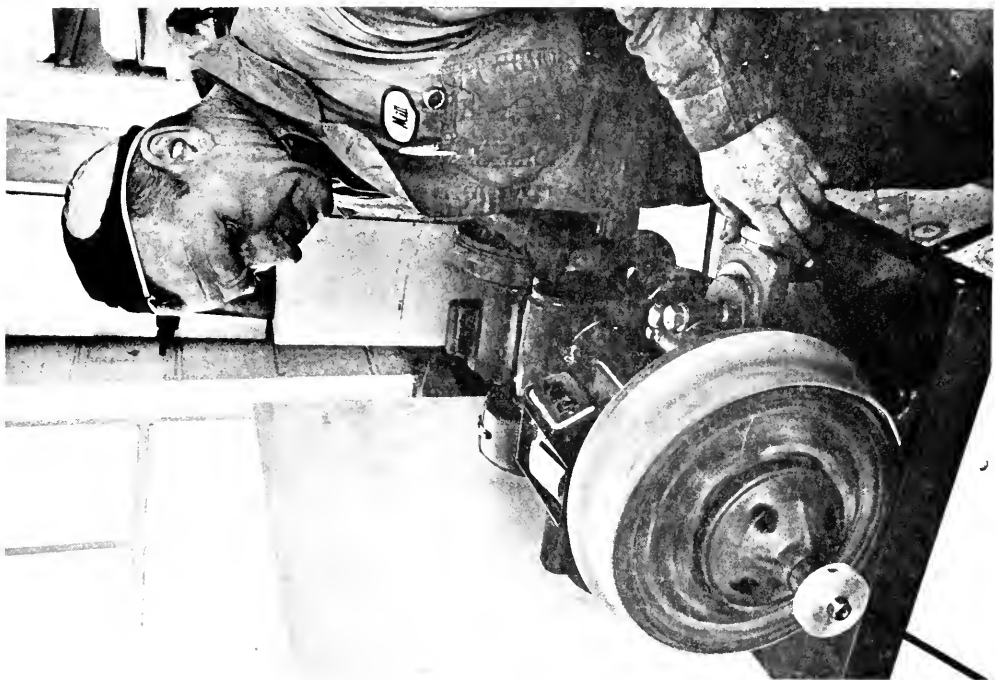
It took Nix a long time to achieve the self-confidence he has now, just as it had taken him a long time to lose his sight and a long time to accept that fact.

He was born in Los Angeles and lived in Southern California most of his life.

"My vision was never very good," he recalls, "I was near-sighted."



BLIND MECHANIC AT WORK





Ironically, he was suffering from a hereditary and progressive eye defect that probably would have blinded him eventually even if he had not been injured when he was 19, in 1933.

He had joined the U. S. Civilian Conservation Corps and was helping fight a brush fire near Pasadena when he was hurt.

The fire suddenly surrounded him and he passed out. He was not burned, but the heat and smoke apparently damaged his optic nerves -- the cords that transmit images from the eye to the brain. For 17 weeks he lay in a veterans home, totally blind.

Gradually his vision returned to what it had been before the fire but, as he learned from doctors later, the nerve was dying slowly. By 1948 he was as blind as he is today.

"I can see light and shade. I can tell the sun is shining in here, but I can't see you," he says.

In the interim, he worked -- on small farms his parents bought in Oregon, in a cannery, on the railroad, as a watchman, as a carpenter and as a lumber mill worker.

He built a sawmill near Oroville and worked at the mill as a mechanic, carpenter and machine operator for three years. His vision was going rapidly by then.

"Driving home in the evening, under the trees, I'd be in light one second, in shade the next. My eyes couldn't react fast enough and I drove off the road twice."

The second time, he walked home, got his wife, and had her drive the truck back. He has not driven since.

But he could still see well enough to work and when he returned to Southern California he leased a service station. It was a success and it looked as though he would make it in spite of the failing eyesight as he gradually learned to work by touch, sound and memory.

But the owner sold the station and Nix lost everything he had built up. The vision was gone now, and with it much of his spirit. He applied for a state pension and his wife, Norma, went to work as a practical nurse.

"I felt real good about going into the bedroom to get my shotgun and do away with myself," he declares.

That was the low point in the life of Milton Nix, the father of two sons--when he finally realized what had been happening over the past 15 years. He had gone blind.

"I'd sit for hours just staring or crying. Poor ol' me.

"I didn't have the guts to shoot myself, so I started drinking. I was going to drink myself to death, I guess. I was hiding.

"One day I said to myself this is no way for me. I could lose my home, and my boys were losing respect for me.

"Pride got hold of me and I started going to church. Then my wife suggested special training. My brother was in the California Orientation Center for the Blind in Oakland, and I went to see him. I quit feeling sorry for myself when I met guys with multiple problems -- blind and crippled, or blind and deaf.

"I enjoy visiting them.

"The superintendent encouraged me to enroll and we got out an application blank and darned if he wasn't blind, too!"

Nix went to school, learned how to live as a blind man, and began 17 years of hard work that finally has brought him to the point he had reached before he lost his sight -- he has his own service station.

His four-month stay at the state school in Oakland was the turning point. He wore a mask all day and learned to live as a totally blind person -- how to travel with a white cane and how to work with power tools safely. He learned a little Braille but does not write it. And he learned to type.

"I can do anything a sighted person can do, except drive, read and write. Even my son forgets that I can't see and when I'm working under a car sometimes he'll say 'Wait a minute, I'll get you a light.'"

Even after he went to the school for the blind, things were hard for Nix. He repaired cars and small motors for neighbors, using an alley or backyard for his garage.

Then in 1961 an outboard motor dealer sponsored him as a

student in its factory school in San Francisco. He learned by memorizing and took his written tests orally. At the end of the month he graduated at the top of his class. It is the only formal education he has ever had in mechanics.

He likes outboard motors because of their sensitivity: "They're moody, they're touchy." His sharpened sense of hearing helps him diagnose the problems of the little two-cycle motors.

While in the school he began looking around for a place to open up shop, and chose Sacramento County with its 35,000 registered power craft, as having the best potential in the state.

His son Bill, who at the time was employed by North American Aviation, threw in with him and they leased the service station last summer.

"The distributor was curious, but he didn't really hesitate to lease us the station," Nix says.

Bill runs the servicing of cars on the islands and handles all the money, but his father does all the ordering -- he keeps the inventories in his head.

The only special tool he has is a Braille ruler. Everything else is standard. The only ones he needs any help with are those with meters -- Bill or Ken Evans, a part-time attendant, read them for him.

Nix is the chief mechanic and does most of the station's work. And, in his own words, "oversees" the work the boys do.

"I've gone all the way from wanting to kill myself to complete satisfaction. I'd like to talk to blind young people. I think I could help 'em."

BLIND GROUP GIVES AID TO OTHERS

(From The Kansas City Star, March 23, 1966)

The Progressive Blind of Missouri, Inc., a small organization, has a small project going which is big in spirit.

Kansas City is home base for the organization and there are

enrolled in the Kansas City chapter possibly 60 members. Outstate or "at large," as they are known to the organization, are perhaps 40 other persons who can claim membership. These 40 live in St. Louis, Joplin and Princeton.

Now their project is simply this: to help the blind in Ceylon; to send cash to the Ceylon Federation of the Blind -- to help, in whatever measure they can, give a little more education to the blind children of Ceylon, and a little more dignity to the lives of the adult blind.

What makes this project great in spirit is the generally low level of income among the blind of Kansas City, and the blind of Missouri.

The Progressive Blind of Missouri issues a report on the progress of the organization semiannually. The latest of these reports is just out. It says:

"Ceylon fund completed. The Progressive Blind is proud to announce that during the last year and a half \$327 has been raised to help the blind of Ceylon. This has been possible through the generosity of its members, the United Workers of the Blind in St. Louis, and the many sighted friends of the Progressive Blind.

"The money will be sent to a specified organization of the blind in Ceylon through Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, president of the International Federation of the Blind. Rienzi Alagiyiwanna, principal of the School for the Deaf and Blind in Mahawewa (Ceylon), who was a visitor in our homes in 1964 and who inspired the raising of the fund, will travel in April to Germany to further study the benefits of education for the blind in order that he may help in his own land where there are still many barriers of prejudice.

"The Braille library at 3821 Flora Avenue has been sending to Ceylon Braille textbooks which are no longer in use in America." . . .

The progress report has this notation on its final page:

"The Progressive Blind members pledged themselves to 'miss a meal' in order to donate the proceeds to the International Federation of the Blind. All members should take action on their pledge and turn their money in either to Mrs. W.W. Beedle, president of the state organization, or Sonia Carr, president of the local chapter."

SAMUEL GRIDLEY HOWE ON BLINDNESS

[Reprinted from Rehabilitation Record, September-October, 1965.]

Out of the intellectual ferment of mid-19th century New England came a remarkable band of social reformers. Henry David Thoreau, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson were typical of the abolitionist-minded, socially-conscious, original thinkers who contributed their spirit to the age. Samuel Gridley Howe was of their kind.

He was born in Boston in 1801. After a properly Bostonian education, including Boston Latin School, Brown University, and the Harvard Medical School, he went to Greece to help in that country's bloody war for independence. On his return to Massachusetts in 1831, Howe was appointed director of the new New England Asylum for the Blind, which survives and flourishes today as Perkins School for the Blind. Despite the enthusiasm with which he threw himself into this work, he remained an incurable causist, and blindness was only one of his causes. With Horace Mann he joined the battle for free public schools. Dorothea Dix enlisted him in her fight for decent treatment of the mentally ill. And he joined with a small group of his fellow abolitionists to finance the abortive expedition of a bearded, fanatical Kansan against the Federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. (When that Kansan, John Brown, was captured, Howe and most of his fellow conspirators found it expedient to move to Canada for a while.)

While serving a term in the Massachusetts legislature, Howe

introduced a resolution which brought about sweeping prison reforms in the State. During the early days of the Civil War, he served his State by surveying the sanitary conditions in which Massachusetts troops were forced to live in and near Washington, D. C. (While there, he and his wife put up at Willard's Hotel, and his wife, hearing a slightly irreverent marching song called "John Brown's Body," was inspired to set new and more elevated lyrics to the tune. Thus we have the "Battle Hymn of the Republic.")

After the war, Howe settled back to his earlier preoccupations: Lightening the load of blindness, teaching speech to the speechless, and providing training for the mentally retarded. In one of history's little ironies, there are today three institutions in Massachusetts which owe their existence to Howe's originating zeal and enthusiasm but which are named for others. The Perkins School in Watertown, the Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, and the Walter E. Fernald State School for mentally retarded children in Waverly could, with justice, all have been called "the Howe School."

In 1866, Howe journeyed to Batavia, New York, there to deliver dedicatory remarks for a new school for the blind. The address he gave there, in the custom of the day, was long. (Two years previously, President Lincoln had been severely criticized for the brevity of his remarks at the dedication of a military cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The main address there, by Edward Everett, had shown more respect for the occasion

by taking 2½ hours to deliver.) The editors of Blindness 1965, the annual publication of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, have resurrected the Batavia speech and have reprinted it. (Blindness 1965. AAWB, 1511 K Street NW, Washington, D.C., 188 pages.)

Herewith, Rehabilitation Record condenses portions of the remarkable speech made that 1866 day in Batavia by Samuel Gridley Howe.

As men and women unwittingly, and sometimes unwillingly, reveal their character, and even their secret motives of action, by the sort of language which they use, so the generations unwittingly reveal the prevailing ideas of the men who lived in them by the works they leave behind.

If we study the monuments which a generation built, and the kind of men in whose honor statues were raised, we may learn much of the character of the people themselves.

You are assembled to lay the foundations of the monument which will speak to future generations; and although what you grave upon the cornerstone and what you put within it should never be seen, the monument itself will talk to future generations.

It will disclose that the physical condition of the human race in this country was imperfect and unfavorable, and that there were born to this generation, and expected to be born in the next, sightless children numerous enough to form a persistent class. That children of this class were not only loved and cherished by their parents and kindred,

but also cared for by the public. That there was no Mount Taygetus here, on which to expose them with other infirm folk to perish or be devoured, but asylums into which they were gathered and nurtured.

It will prove that the State of New York, which could dig out a navigable river clear across her broad land—which has just armed and sent forth 300,000 sturdy soldiers to serve the common country and the cause of humanity—that this great State, while holding on in her high career of material prosperity and providing schools for all the children, took thought also that not even the sightless little ones should be neglected.

But while thus noting with pleasure and even excusable pride the humane impulses which prompt and which will carry forward the work, pardon me if I utter a word of warning.

Good intentions and kind impulses do not necessarily lead to wise and truly human measures. Nowhere is wisdom more necessary than in the guidance of charitable impulses. Meaning well is only half our duty; thinking right is the other and equally important half.

Every one of you has probably learned by experience that he may by alms or unwise aid increase the very suffering which he sought to relieve.

How many times have you given for the mere luxury of giving? It is not only more blessed to give than to receive, but also more pleasant. Take an extreme case and consider how many children are positively harmed by having too much done for them; and especially by having

gifts showered too profusely upon them.

To those born of wealthy parents, Santa Claus instead of a yearly visitor is a common carrier, and the class generally suffers rather from excess of sympathy than from lack of it; more from what is done for them than from what is left undone; more from attentions than neglect.

Now as to blind children: Better a bruise or a bump than not to make their own way about. If an ordinary child falls over an object, you cry, "Jump up and try another!" You should cry that to the blind. But no; those dear children must learn no hard lesson through suffering. Every obstacle must be removed from their way, which must be carpeted with velvet; and they must be cautioned against danger instead of being encouraged to meet it. They are helped to do what they should learn to do alone; kept at home when they should be urged abroad; seated in the rockingchair when they should be tumbling about house and grounds; helped and waited upon when they should be held to help and wait upon their elders; spared when they should be urged; enervated where they should be hardened; and often demoralized by the habit of receiving as gifts what they should earn by hard effort or resolutely forego.

It frequently happens that parents refuse to send a blind child to an institution until the best years for study are passed, simply from excess of affection and anxiety for its safety. The other children may wander abroad to gather courage and strength from facing dangers and overcoming difficulties but this dear pet who has the sorest need of all to be trained to hardy self-reliance must be

wrapped in flannel and kept in the rockingchair to grow up pale, and flabby, and awkward, and timid because his mother "loved him, not wisely but too well."

As it is with individuals, so it is with communities because society, moved by pity for some special form of suffering, hastens to build up establishments which sometimes increase the very evil which it wishes to lessen.

There are several such already in this country, and unless we take heed there will be many more. Our people have rather a passion for public institutions, and when their attention is drawn to any suffering class, they make haste to organize one for its benefit.

But instead of first carefully inquiring whether an institution is absolutely necessary, that is whether there is no more natural and effective manner of relieving the class, and afterwards taking care that no vicious principle be incorporated into the establishment, they hastily build a great showy building and gather within its walls a crowd of persons of like condition or infirmity, and organize a community where everything goes by clockwork and steam. If there be a vicious principle in the organization, as of closely associating persons who ought to live apart, it is forgotten in admiration of contrivances for making steam do what was once done by the good housewife, and of the big bright coppers, the garish walls, and the white floors.

No class has suffered so much from this lack of wisdom in the guidance of charitable emotions as the blind have suffered, and do suffer. And this is easily

understood. Of all the bodily defects or infirmities, blindness is the one which seems the most dreadful. We feel and comprehend at once the severity of the privation and we imagine that it entails a great deal more suffering and unhappiness than it really does. The sight of a blind man, and still more of a blind child, touches every heart and appeals forcibly for sympathy and aid.

This sympathy and pity prompt us at once to some outward action. They are too strong for our control. We must do something, and not knowing well what to do—not understanding what the sufferers really need—we put our hands in our pockets and give money.

Such is the general treatment which the blind as a class have received from the public in all countries. That treatment shows the existence of tender and charitable feelings the world over. But it shows also that those feelings, if unguided by reason, may do as much harm as good, if not more. With all their pity and their sympathy, people have failed to give the blind man what he most needs, and have unwittingly put obstacles in the way of his getting it.

Even the modern institutions of Europe and America, greatly superior as they are, in most respects, to the old ones, and admirable as most of them are, still savor too much of being merely charitable. They are organized too much like almshouses, and administered in such wise as to tend strongly to the formation of life asylums disguised under other names.

The time is past, with us at least, when blindness is considered as a special dispensation of Providence in punishment

of a special sin. And yet, not long past, for the Duke of York rudely asked Milton if he did not think he had lost sight as a punishment for writing his *Eikonoklastes* and otherwise aiding rebellion against royalty; to which came the swift and fitting answer, "If so, your highness, how was it with your father, who lost all his senses and his head, too?"

The blind will always want sympathy, and generally need aid; but they do not want to be segregated from ordinary society, nor to be considered as a class apart.

Common politeness, which is only kindness wisely directed, suggests that in our intercourse with a blind man we should never needlessly allude to his infirmity, but treat him as if he had none. And common sense suggests that when we would help him, we should do it as we would help any other person; by putting him in the way of helping himself.

Now, as in the treatment of an individual blind man, so should it be with the treatment of the class. The State should admit the right of every child, whether native or foreign, black or white, sound or infirm, to the benefits of instruction at public expense. This is the wise policy of some of our States where public provision is made for the gratuitous instruction of all our children by placing a free schoolhouse within the reach of every family. As the logical consequences of this policy, if the mode of instruction in those free schools is such that any class of children, as the mutes, the blind, or the feeble-minded, cannot be taught by it, then special instruction is provided for each class and they are gathered into public institutions and maintained as well as

taught at public charge.

If you bear in mind what I said about the evil effects of alms, and of charitable gifts upon the blind, you will see the importance of insisting that blind children shall receive instructions from the State not as a matter of charity, but as a matter of right.

I accept my full share of condemnation when I say that grave errors were incorporated into the very organic principles of our institutions for the blind, which make them already too much like asylums; which threaten to cause real asylums to grow out of them, and to engender other evils.

All great establishments in the nature of boarding schools where the sexes must be separated; where there must be boarding in common, and sleeping in congregate dormitories; where there must be routine, and formality, and restraint, and repression of individuality; where the charms and refining influences of the true family relation cannot be had—all such institutions are unnatural, undesirable, and very liable to abuse. We should have as few of them as possible, and those few should be kept as small as possible.

Artificial families have been tried and found wanting. Wherever there must be separation of the sexes, isolation from society, absence of true family relation, and monotony of life, there must come evils of various kinds which no watchfulness can prevent and no physician can cure.

We should be cautious about establishing such artificial communities, or those approaching them in character, for

any children and youth; but more especially should we avoid them for those who have any natural infirmity or any marked peculiarity of mental organization.

Such persons spring up sporadically in the community and they should be kept diffused among sound and normal people. Separation and not congregation should be the law for their treatment; for out of their infirmity or abnormality there necessarily grow some abnormal and undesirable effects and unless these be counteracted by education, they disturb the harmonious development of character.

As much as may be, surround insane and excitable persons with sane people and ordinary influences; vicious children with virtuous people and virtuous influences; blind children with those who see; mute children with those who speak.

People run counter to this principle for the sake of economy and of some other good end which they suppose cannot be had in any other way; as when they congregate the insane in hospitals, vicious children in reformatories, criminals in prisons, blind children and mute children in boarding schools. Hence, I begin to consider such establishments as evils which must be borne with for the time in order to obviate greater evils. I would take heed, however, against multiplying them unnecessarily. I would keep them as small as I could.

The home of the blind and of the mute should be his native town or village. There, if possible, he should live during childhood and youth; there he should form his friendships. Beware how you needlessly sever any of those ties of family, of friendship, of neighborhood

during the period of their strongest growth, lest you make a homeless man, a wanderer, and a stranger.

I would observe, by the way, that the necessity now felt for a new institution in your State has arisen, partly at least, from radical faults in the organization of the old one, which necessarily led to faults in its administration such as I have noted.

Take heed that it shall be organized on sound principles and, while copying all good features of existing institutions, avoid those which are not good. Those institutions are all faulty. Never mind their showy buildings and special accommodations. You may as well measure the morality of a family by the structure and arrangement of its dwelling house as test institutions by their mechanical advantages.

Instead, then, of copying the existing institutions, I think that in organizing a new one something like the following rough plan should be adopted: If the field were all clear and no buildings provided, there should be built only a building for schoolrooms, recitation rooms, music rooms, and workshops. For other purposes, ordinary houses would suffice.

In deciding who are to be received as pupils, you should first ascertain how many of the applicants are really blind, and then, instead of imitating the example of ordinary institutions and getting as many into the school as possible, you should receive as few as possible; that is, you should reject every one who can be taught in common schools. I am constantly applied to by teachers to know how to proceed with a blind child, and I

always encourage them to keep it at home and let it go to the common school as long as possible.

Then there will be some, not quite blind, who might be taught in common schools if special pains were taken with them and special encouragement given. They should not be admitted as regular pupils of the institution, especially if they live nearby.

After they have been some years in the common schools, some of them will be old enough to go to work and will find employment; others will desire to return to the institution to learn such handicraft as is suitable for them. Keep them about one year and then send them home to work at their trades. Then the select pupils, say 50 in number, should have every possible advantage and opportunity for study and improvement.

Thus your institution will best stand that crucial test of excellence among kindred establishments, to wit, giving instruction, aid, and assistance to the greatest number of blind persons while keeping the least number within its walls and away from home.

You may regard me as an optimist; but my faith in the elevation and improvement of man's physical condition as a step toward his moral elevation springs from my faith in the love and good will of the Great Father who breathed into his children a part of his divine spirit which, from its very essence, must grow brighter and brighter until the perfect day.

May his blessings rest upon the work which you this day begin.

MONITOR MINIATURES

Mrs. Marie Erich of Los Angeles, blind teacher of braille transcribers, was honored with two service to the blind awards for 1965. She was given the National Distinguished Service Award for her work in music braille, by the Sigma Alpha Iota Fraternity of professional women musicians. Mrs. Erich was one of the three recipients of this newly established citation. She also received the National Distinguished Service Merit Award from the National Braille Association for her many hours of work in behalf of the visually handicapped.

Last year Mrs. Erich compiled a pocket-size braille contraction booklet which is published by Active Blind, Inc., 1419 South Wilson Place, Los Angeles, California, 90019, which may be obtained at fifty cents a copy.

The South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind will hold its annual Convention the weekend of September 23, 24 and 25 at the Wade Hampton Hotel in Columbia. Aurorans will remember the excellent Convention held at this Hotel in 1963.

Congratulations to Ruby Bryant, operator of the stand in the Richland County Courthouse, as she was recently presented a 55 cup coffee urn as a gift from the employees of the Courthouse. Ruby badly needed the additional urn and the gift from the Courthouse employees can only be interpreted as an expression of the high esteem in which Ruby is held.

Harry Fribush, deaf-blind, has requested that we publish the following: A Super Special Offer to blind people in the U. S. ; eighteen all braille Birthday and Get Well Greeting cards for sixty cents post paid. Please send payment and orders to Harry A. Fribush, 28 Colonial Avenue, Albany, N. Y. 12203. No Limit. Please include Zip Code.

The Birmingham Chapter of the Alabama Federation of the Blind enjoyed their annual Valentines Banquet held on Saturday evening, February 12 at the Dinkler Tutwiler Hotel. Entertainment and group singing leadership was furnished by a prominent local accordionist. Several door prizes were awarded. A dance followed these festivities with band music furnished under the direction of Tommy Ray, a member of the Federation Chapter. Among those present were Mrs. Eulasee

Hardenburg, National Federation of the Blind Secretary and active member of the Birmingham Chapter, along with out state president, Rogers Smith of the Montgomery Chapter, and his wife. In addition to the sixty-two members there were fifty-three friends present.

The New Mexico Federation of the Blind Convention is scheduled for Saturday, May 28, 1966 at the Hilton Hotel in Albuquerque. Registration begins at 9 A.M. and adjournment is set for 5:30 P.M.

Vera McClain, social chairman of the Birmingham Chapter of the Alabama Federation of the Blind, is currently sponsoring a local dishcloth sale. One hundred five dozen dishcloths are being sold by Birmingham members to earn \$168 for the organization's general fund. These knit dishcloths were purchased from the Sangamon Mills, Inc., of Cohoes, New York.

The Michigan Council of the Blind Convention will take place on Saturday and Sunday, May 14 and 15, at the Hart Hotel, Battle Creek, Michigan. Hotel rates are as follows: singles -- \$5.50; doubles -- \$7.50; twins -- \$8.50 to \$10.50. The banquet will occur on Saturday evening at 6:15. Tickets will cost \$3.00.

From AP, Taunton, Mass. -- Forty paintings by Merrill A. Maynard are on display in a one-man show in Taunton. But Maynard will never see them. Maynard went blind when he was 16. His wife, Edith, has been blind since she was 5 years old. He began painting two years ago and uses pigment sticks numbered in braille. Bright colors dominate many of his paintings.

At the OCB [Ohio] seminar held recently, we had the advantage of a discussion on welfare by Robert Canary, Administrative Assistant to the State Welfare Director, a second discussion on redistricting in practical politics by State Representative Ralph Turner, and a discourse on federal legislation pertaining to rehabilitation by Everett Steech, Chief Administrator, Division of Services for the Blind. These three sources of information provided ample material for our discussions. Many questions were raised, and many of them got answers, though not always satisfactory.

The 1966 VFB Convention is to take place at the new Holiday Inn near Harrisonburg, Virginia, beginning Friday evening, April 22 and concluding around noon on Sunday, April 24. Miss Retha Brown, of the host affiliate, is serving the capacity of chairman of the Convention Arrangements Committee. Excellent progress has already been forthcoming in planning the convention program.

National Association of the Physically Handicapped President Marilyn W. Woods tells how New Hampshire's new H-Flag will be used by physically handicapped drivers stranded in inoperative cars. As proposed by Granite State NAPH Chapters, a law limiting the use of the H-Flag to disabled drivers was enacted recently by the state legislature. Similar laws exist in several other states.

Thanks are due to Ways and Means for the Blind of Georgia for 40 mailers supplied for the tape edition of the BRAILLE MONITOR.

The Iowa State Board of Regents announced that it had received the resignation, effective June 30, 1966, of Don L. Walker, Iowa Braille and Sight Saving school superintendent.

Kenneth Jernigan, Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, and First Vice President of the N. F. B. submitted to serious surgery on February 18, and has made a very good recovery. He was able to appear on Project 600 radio station WMT in Cedar Rapids on Wednesday evening, March 9.

Leroy Stadtlander, 71, a long time member of the Iowa Association of the Blind, died on February 10 at his home in Burlington, Iowa. Stadtlander was an accomplished musician and had operated a hardware store for several years. In his later life he was a Braille proof reader, and one of his accomplishments in this field was work on the 46 volume Encyclopedia.

Neil Butler, president of the Iowa Association of the Blind, has moved to a new home which he purchased. His address is 3725 Center Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50312.

James Valliant has returned to the staff of the Iowa Commission for the Blind as Executive Assistant to the Director.

Manuel Rubin, president of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts, appeared in the Hemco Echo. Hemco Echo is the newspaper of the employees of the Hemingway Transport Inc. Manny wrote a letter of thanks for the courtesy and assistance of Hemingway Truck drivers.

From T. F. Moody, Houston, Texas:

T. F. Moody on April

April's always glad she metcha,
And she does cloud up and wetcha,
She'll send the sun next day to petcha --
It's her winning ways that getcha.
